United Nations CEDAW/C/MLI/6-7

Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Distr.: General
28 April 2015
English
Original: French

Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Consideration of reports submitted by States parties under Article 18 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

Combined sixth and seventh periodic reports of States parties due in 2010

Mali*

[Date of receipt: 27 April 2015]

* The present report is being issued without formal editing.

15-06738 (E) 120615 160615

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Acronyms and abbreviations

ACBF: African Capacity-Building Foundation

AMADER: Malian Agency for Energy Development and Rural Electrification

AMDH: Malian Association for Human Rights

AMO: Mandatory Health Insurance

AMTSL: Active management of the third stage of labour

ANICT: National Investment Agency for Local Authorities

ANPE: National Employment Agency

AN-RM: National Assembly of the Republic of Mali

ANSSA: National Food Safety Agency

APCAM: Permanent Assembly of Chambers of Agriculture

APEJ: Agency for Youth Employment

ARV: antiretroviral

ASPROFER: Professional Association of Rural Women

AU: African Union

BOAD: West African Development Bank

CADHP: African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights

CAFE: Women's Learning Centre

CAP: Educational Outreach Centres

CBMT: Medium Term Budgetary Framework

CCDV: Voluntary Counselling and Testing Centre

CCLIC: Local Information and Communication Centre

CCLS: Local Committee to Combat AIDS

CCS SFD: Monitoring and Oversight Unit of the Decentralized Financial Systems

CDE: Convention on the Rights of the Child

CDI: Institutional Development Commission

CEA: Economic Commission for Africa

CED: Centre for Education in Support of Development

CEDAW: Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women

CESAC: Counselling, Support and Assistance Centre

CLAPN: Local Committee to Combat Practices Harmful to Maternal and Child Health

CLLS: Local Council to Combat AIDS

CNAPN: National Action Committee to Combat Practices Harmful to Maternal and Child Health

CNDIFE: National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child

CNR/ENF: National Centre for Non-formal Education Resources

CPS: National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child

CRAPN: Regional Committee to Combat Practices Harmful to Maternal and Child Health

CRLS: Regional Council to Combat AIDS

CRM: Mali Retirement Fund

CROCEP: Regional Committee for Guidance, Coordination and Evaluation of PRODESS

CRT: Committee for Regulation of Telecommunications

CSCOM: Community Health Centre

CSCRP: Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction

CSLP: Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty

CVLS: Village Committee to Combat AIDS

DNEF: National Directorate of Primary Education

DNS: National Health Directorate

DOEF: Department of Employment and Training

ECAPDEF: Survey of Knowledge, Attitudes, and Practices on the Rights of Children and Women

ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States

EDS/EDSM: Malian Demographic and Health Survey (DHS)

EID: Forum for Democratic Discussion

ELIM: Light Integrated Household Survey

EPAM: Continuous Survey of Households

FAM: Medical Assistance Fund

FAWE: African Women Educators' Forum

FENAFER: National Federation of Rural Women

FNAM: National Federation of Malian Crafts and Trades Workers

GED: Gender and Development

GNP: Gross National Product

HCNLS: High Council for the Fight Against AIDS

HIV: Human Immunodeficiency Virus

ICT: Information and Communication Technology

IEC: Information, Education and Communication

ILO: International Labour Organization

INPS: National Social Welfare Institute

INSTAT: National Institute of Statistics

MAEP: Peer Review Mechanism

MDG: Millennium Development Goal

MPFEF: Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families

NGO: Non-Governmental Organization

OHADA: Organization for the Harmonization of Business Law in Africa

PAGIRE: Plan d'Action de Gestion Intégrée des Ressources en Eau/Integrated Water Resources Management Plan

PAN: National Cross-cutting Action Programmes

PAREHF: Programme to Strengthen Equity between Men and Women

PASAOP: Programme to support the Farm System and Rural Organizations

PCDHG: United Nations support programme for the promotion of human rights

PDES: Economic and Social Development Programme

PDHEG: Human Rights Gender Equity Project

PDSEC: Social, Economic and Cultural Development Programme

PNAE: Environmental Actions Plan

PNEHF: National Policy for Equality between Men and Women

PNLE: National Programme to Combat Excision

PNPE: National Environment Protection Policy

PRODEC: Decennial Education Development Programme

PRODEJ: Decennial Justice Development Programme

PRODESS: Decennial Socio-sanitary Development Programme

PROJES: Project for Equality between the Sexes

PTF: Technical and Financial Partners

PTME: Programme to prevent Mother-to-Child Transmission

PVVIH: People Living with HIV

RAMED: Medical Assistance Scheme

RECOFEM: Capacity-building Programme for Women's Organizations

REFAE: Network of African Women Economists

UN: United Nations Organization

WAEMU: West African Economic and Monetary Union

Specific information in reference to the fundamental Articles of the Convention (articles 1 to 16)

Article 1: Definition of discrimination against women

1. Mali has ratified the Convention without reservation. Thus, Mali fully adheres to the definition of gender discrimination contained in the Convention, in conformity with article 116 of its constitution, which provides that "... treaties or agreements properly ratified or approved shall, from the moment they are published, have precedence over national legislation".

2. Article 2 of the Malian Constitution which entered into force on 25 February 1992 provides as follows: "Every Malian is born and remains free and equal in rights and duties. All discrimination on the basis of social origin, colour, language, race, sex, religion or political opinion shall be prohibited."

3. Like other countries, Mali has ratified the Protocol to the African Charter of Human and People's Rights on the Rights of Women in Africa. The Protocol was adopted in July 2003 and entered into force on 25 November 2005.

Article 2: Constitutional and legislative provisions and other measures adopted for the purpose of eliminating discrimination against women

4. The Malian Constitution clearly ordains the principle of equality and non-discrimination in articles 1 to 21 thereby guaranteeing that men and women have the same rights and individual freedoms with respect to freedom of thought, freedom of conscience, freedom of religion, freedom of worship, freedom of opinion, freedom of expression, freedom of creation, freedom of movement, freedom of residence, freedom of association, freedom of assembly, freedom of procession and demonstration, freedom of artistic and cultural creation, property rights, freedom of enterprise, right to education, right to training, right to housing, right to recreation, right to health, right to social protection, right to work, right to rest, freedom to join a labour union and right to strike.

(a) On the basis of the discrimination defined in article 2 of the constitution, law 01-079 of 20 August 2001 establishing the Penal Code contains a provision in article 58 which lays down a penalty consisting of imprisonment for a period of five years for any statement or act of such a kind as to create or give rise to racial or ethnic discrimination, any statement or act whose aim is to incite or perpetuate the spread of regional bias, any manifestation contrary to freedom of worship that might produce antagonisms between citizens ...."

This provision of the Penal Code, however, does not cover discrimination on the basis of sex.

(b) There is legal protection for the rights of women on an equal basis with men through national courts, State agencies and other public institutions. Jurisdictions, whether judicial or administrative, make no distinction between men and women in applying the Codes of Civil or Commercial Procedure, the Code of Penal Procedure, etc.

5. Despite the fact that the Constitution of 25 February 1992 prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex, there are certain practices which depart from that principle, in particular with regard to succession, the practice of excision, under-age marriage and other practices that may be harmful to the health of women and children.

6. In addition to these constitutional, legislative and regulatory measures, mention should be made of numerous programmes or projects that have been developed, such as the United Nations support programme for the promotion of human and gender rights (PCDHG), the Project to Support Strengthening Gender Equity through Reduction of Economic and Socio-political Disparities (Projet d'Appui au Renforcement de l'Equité Homme/Femme pour la Réduction des Disparités Economiques et Sociopolitiques (PAREHF)), and the Project on Equality between the Sexes (Projet d'Egalité entre les Sexes (PROJES)). These projects and programmes have, inter alia, helped to make possible the following:

- Translating the information concerning male-female equality, especially the relevant protocols, into lan[illegible]ccessible to the largest number of people possible;
- Translating the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women into national languages and its dissemination;
- Translating the Maputo Protocol and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women into layman's language;
- Ratification of the international and African conventions and protocols guaranteeing women's rights;
- Continued dissemination of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to government and institutions:
- Government (50 officials)
- National Assembly (50 members)
- Economic, social and cultural council (50 members)
- Universities (300 students)
- Military and security forces (100 persons in the aggregate)
- Legal practitioners (50 jurists)
- Traditional and modern communicators (50 people)
- Civil society organizations and populations (50 association leaders)
- Formation of 10 core groups of trainers on the Convention for all the regions of Mali (90 trainers trained).

7. There are also national institutions and associations dealing with human rights which have the protection of women's rights within their mandate, such as: the National Human Rights Commission, the Malian Association for Human Rights, the Executive Secretariat of the African Peer Review Mechanism (MAEP), the Forum for Democratic Discussion of the Office of the Mediator of the Republic.

Article 3: Full Development and Advancement of Women

I. INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

8. The institutional framework established since 1997 has undergone an organizational audit and an audit of missions in 2007 by the Institutional Development Commission.

9. This audit revealed shortcomings and lacunae with regard to the organization and functional modalities of the National Directorate for the Advancement of Women (Direction Nationale de la Promotion de la Femme), which led to a review of the governing provisions and the establishment of Regional Directorates for women's advancement and child and family welfare.

10. The main innovations have included the following:

- A reception and orientation office was created staffed at the national level;
- A planning and follow-up/evaluation unit was created and staffed at the national and regional levels; certain decentralized management activities were transferred;
- Focal points were designated for the sectoral departments. At the subregional level, a local service for the advancement of women, children and the family was established;
- This reform aims to equip the Ministry with competent structures for efficient implementation of its national women's advancement policy. It reinforces the existing system of related services, namely:
- The National Women's Documentation and Information Centre, which became the National Information Centre on Women and Children in 2004;
- The National Programme to Combat Excision.

11. New support projects have emerged, replacing projects mentioned in previous reports whose terms have come to an end. These are:

- The "Project on Equality between the Sexes" (PROJES), funded by Canada;
- The Capacity-Building Programme for Women's Organizations (RECOFEM) funded by ACBF and the national budget;
- The project "Promoting Human Rights, Equity and Gender Equality" (PDHEG) funded by the United Nations Fund for Population Activities (UNFPA).

12. Finally, new programmes have arisen, funded or co-funded by the national budget and development partners in the context of bilateral or multilateral cooperation:

- The National Programme to Develop Multifunctional Platforms;
- The National Programme to Support Women Economic Actors;
- The Programme to Support Women in Shea Production.

13. With regard to the tasks assigned to Gender and Development Advisers and focal points designated by ministerial departments,[1] they have not achieved results.

14. This failure is due in particular to staff movements, failure to grasp the task assigned, and lack of influence over sectoral policies.

15. There is an overall review under way to re-define the status of these focal points and their missions in order to make them effective.

16. The role of civil society in the institutional landscape is being bolstered by the birth of new networks/coordination entities in order to increase synergy amongst the activities being carried out. A coordinating body for women economic actors (Coordination des Femmes Opératrices Economiques) has been created which includes within it several networks or groupings; creation of the National Federation of Rural Women; the "Women's ICT Network"; the Small Industries Development Organization Network (women involved in shea production), etc.

17. In this new institutional scenario, fora are being created for exchanges, for training and information for women, notably ten (10) shelters for women and children, including two (2) in Bamako and one (1) in each region, and twenty-three (23) women's self-help centres in certain municipalities and communes of Mali.

18. Finally, the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction, a unified frame of reference for national development policies and programmes (2012-2017), provides for institutional measures to foster the narrowing of inequalities between the sexes, in particular:

- The adoption of the gender approach as a strategic element in each development sector and at all levels;
- The establishment of a disaggregated information system in the various structures responsible for collecting and processing economic and social data;
- The establishment of institutionalization committees in the institutional mechanism of ministerial departments.

19. Significant challenges remain, however, for the proper operation of the structures and mechanisms that have been set up. These are related to persistent social pressures and insufficient qualified human resources, financial resources and mechanisms for follow-up and evaluation of projects and programmes.

II. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR PROMOTION OF EQUALITY BETWEEN MEN AND WOMEN

(a) Commission on Employment, Youth and Advancement of Women of the National Assembly;

(b) Ad-hoc Committee and Advisory Committee in the framework of the process of developing the National Gender Policy; Co-ordination structures for male/female equality in sectoral departments, including the Advisory Committee of the Ministry of Justice and the Committee on Institutionalization of Male/female Equality of the Ministry of Labour and Civil Service;

[1] Report 3, 4 and 5, CEDAW/C/MLI/2-5.

(c) Mechanisms to follow up on addressing male/female equality (comparative analysis of situation between sexes, gender-sensitive budgeting, evaluation, supervision, reports). Among these mechanisms, mention may be made of the database "Women and Children" piloted by the National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child (CNDIFE) covering all twelve priority areas of the Beijing Platform for Action.

(d) Building capacities to ensure coverage of male/female equality, particularly through the design and execution of training activities by the technical structures of the ministry, the projects and programmes (RECOFEM, PAREHF, PROJES) and the development of an annual programme for training gender instructors.

20. In addition, the National Assembly, NGOs and associations participate in male/female equality endeavours in the areas that are of concern to them.

III. POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES

21. For the period 2008-2012 the Ministry has developed a framework document. This document, adopted by the Council of Ministers, is built around three strategic orientations geared to the advancement of women, as follows:

(1) Strengthening women's economic capacities;

(2) Developing women's leadership;

(3) Promoting the gender approach in projects and programmes.

National Gender Policy and the supporting Action Plan for 2011-2013

22. The Government of Mali has adopted a National Gender Policy aimed at:

- Gender mainstreaming in national development policies and programmes;
- Consolidating democracy and the rule of law through equal access to and full enjoyment of fundamental rights;
- Involvement of women in production processes, equal access to employment and factors of production;
- Equal participation in decision-making fora; promoting equality in social values and behaviours;
- Institutionalizing gender in programmes, projects, policies and public reforms, and translating it into budgets.

23. The major obstacle remains sociocultural pressures which continue to maintain discrimination against women despite the existence of policies and laws aimed at improving the status of women and protecting them against discrimination.

Article 4: Affirmative-action measures and special measures that favour women

I. IN THE FIELD OF EDUCATION

24. The government's special commitment to girls and women has led to the adoption of affirmative-action measures that favour girls, particularly:

- The giving of bonus points to girls to promote access to different levels of education, namely: credit of one year under the age criterion during secondary education orientations and enrolment in higher education;
- Elimination of certain stereotypes in the development of level 3 curricula (year 5 of basic schooling). Teaching materials will no longer contain pictures of women busy performing traditionally female tasks or activities. Similarly, boys and girls in school will be assigned the same tasks;
- Establishment of a "Mentoring" programme for female students in the sciences, providing them with monitoring and guidance from older students throughout their time in school;
- Adoption in January 2007 of a policy on non-formal education which gives an important part to girls who have never attended school or have dropped out;
- Revising the course curriculum and textbooks used in primary school education in order to take the specific needs of girls better into account. Modules devoted to "Gender" have been included in the training programmes of primary school teachers;
- The establishment of programmes for youth that permit the granting of study grants for 1 year primarily to girls;
- The establishment of literacy centres and the setting up of literacy programmes for women in all regions of Mali and in Bamako District;
- The creation of four Women's Learning Centres (Centres d'Apprentissage Féminin — CAFE) throughout the country, with more than 200 learners. The number of centres reached 38 in 2011-2012, with 1,419 learners/auditors;
- Support for women's micro-projects by alpha-management programmes.

II. IN THE AREA OF HEALTH

25. According to the provisions of Law 02-044 of 24 June 2002 concerning reproductive health, men and women enjoy equal rights and dignity in regard to reproductive health. The law establishes the principle that every individual may lead a sex life that is responsible, satisfying and risk-free.

26. Partners in a conjugal relationship and individuals have the right to decide freely how many children they will have and the spacing between them according to their own best judgement, and to have access to the information necessary for that purpose.

27. Under the new law, abortion is permitted to protect the life of the mother. Also, if pregnancy could put the life of a married woman at risk, she is entitled to have access to an irreversible method of contraception by giving her own written consent to the procedure. Measures include the following:

- Providing for the feeding of the baby of an HIV-positive mother by breast-milk substitutes;
- Subsidizing family planning services;
- Renewal of the project on reproductive health for young people and adoption of a national strategic plan of reproductive health for adolescents and young

people (SRAJ) one of whose goals is to combat early and unwanted pregnancy among adolescents, sexually transmitted disease, and HIV/AIDS;

- Free malaria treatment for expectant women and for children under the age of five;
- Free distribution of insecticide-treated mosquito nets to expectant women and to children under the age of five;
- Treatment of cancers among women, particularly breast cancer and cervical cancer;
- Free Caesarean section and antiretroviral drugs;
- Implementation of the roadmap for accelerating the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality and neonatal morbidity in Mali;
- Implementation of the Human Rights Gender Equity Programme designed to combat the practice of excision;
- Creation of mother-child pools, introduction of medical assistance schemes, social security and mandatory health insurance.

28. The implementation of these measures has led, inter alia, to the following results:[2]

- A significant increase in the rate of antenatal consultations was noted for the country as a whole between 2002 and 2006, rising from 54 per cent to 76 per cent. The rate stands at 82 per cent in 2008 and is estimated at 90 per cent for 2009;
- Improvement in the rate of attended births for the country as a whole, rising from 40 per cent in 2002 to 53 per cent in 2006. The rate stood at 61 per cent in 2008 and 64 per cent in 2009;
- The maternal mortality rate declined from 582 per 100,000 live births in 2001 to 464 in 2006;
- The coverage rate of VAT 2 vaccination for women rose from 44 per cent in 2005 to 64 per cent in 2008.

29. The rate of assisted births remained at 57 per cent in 2010-2011, whereas it had reached 69 per cent in 2009. A reduction was observed in the number of women reporting that they had undergone excision from 92 per cent in 2001 (EDSM-III) to 85 per cent in 2006, then to 83 per cent in 2010 (MICS-2010).

30. The take-up rate for antenatal consultations went from 90 per cent in 2009 to 79 per cent in 2010, then to 76 per cent in 2011. On the other hand, the average number of antenatal consultations per pregnant woman went from 2.08 in 2009 to 2.09 in 2010 and to 2.16 in 2011. In other words, the share of pregnant women who make use of antenatal consultations is declining but those who make use of them are doing so more frequently.

31. The use of family planning services has increased from 4.86 per cent in 2010 to 6.12 per cent in 2011. This improvement may be explained by better availability of contraceptives at all levels and the promotion of long-term methods in several

[2] According to the local health information system of the National Health Directorate.

regions, but also by better data collection on family planning by NGOs and private organizations.

III. IN THE AREA OF EMPLOYMENT

32. In the area of employment, the following may be noted:

- Order 92-024/CTSP of 12 May 1992 concerning the taxation of female employees' earnings, with a view to reducing the amount of tax a woman owes depending on how many children she has;
- A woman's employment contract cannot be terminated by reason of absence when she is on maternity leave, and her pay cannot be reduced;
- For each living dependent child she has, a woman is credited with one additional year's service;
- If a woman with three living children resigns from her employment without being entitled to a pension, she is paid a 10 per cent bonus;
- Women have the right to specific safeguards in connection with certain kinds of work (night work, work in underground mines);
- For each child that is born to her, a woman's retirement age is reduced by one year.

33. A national employment policy was adopted by the Government in 1999. In the implementation of this policy numerous programmes have emerged.

34. In implementing these projects and programmes, a two-pronged approach has been adopted so that the sex-specific dimension of job creation will be reflected in all aspects of the programme and so that priority attention will be given to employment of women. This approach includes integrating criteria of gender equity in the programme as a whole and execution of specific projects for promoting employment that have strong job-creation potential for women.

35. The monthly income of nearly 53 per cent of actively employed persons is below the general minimum wage (currently set at 28,460 CFA francs).

- The monthly wage of men is 53,000 CFA francs and that of women is 22,000 CFA francs;
- Seven women out of ten earn less than the general minimum wage, compared to three men out of ten.

36. The proportion of women working in the civil service has increased: 19.4 per cent in 2006, 26.5 per cent in 2007 and 26.7 per cent in 2008.

37. In the area of economic affairs and finance, women face difficulties in gaining access to the means and factors of production: land, credit, equipment, inputs, training, information, accommodations.

38. Analysis shows that from 2004 to 2007 the employment trend shifted in favour of women (58.6 per cent for men and 41.4 per cent for women in 2004, compared to 49 per cent for men and 51 per cent for women in 2007). Despite this gain, women's earnings from employment remained weak and the great majority of them continued to work in the informal sector.

IV. THE SOCIAL AREA

Article 5: Role differentiation and stereotyping

39. In Mali, as part of the promotion and protection of human rights of women and girls, the legal environment has made significant headway. Besides the Constitution, which guarantees the same rights to citizens of both sexes without discrimination, different legal texts incorporate the gender dimension by taking into account the situation of men and women.

40. As part of the effective realization of women's rights, many programmes and projects have been initiated and implemented by the Government and its partners, e.g. by the Programme to Strengthen Equity between Men and Women (PAREFH) and the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families (MPFEF).

41. The programmes and projects of a para-legal nature have helped greatly to make women and girls aware of their fundamental human rights and to better apply the law. In short, the implementation of these programmes and projects has greatly helped to curb negative practices and lead to better enjoyment of human rights by women and girls in the different areas of engagement of the Declaration.

42. In addition, the implementation of the National Gender Policy and the related plan of action adopted by the Government marks a significant step forward for women.

43. This policy, an outcome of the results of the prospective study "Mali 2015", envisages "a nation united on a diversified and renewed social base, a democratic political and institutional organization, securing development and social peace, a strong and diversified open economy, a reduction of poverty and social progress extending to all regions and all categories of the population".

44. The National Gender Policy is structured around six strategic orientations:

- Consolidation of Malian democracy and the rule of law through equal access to and full enjoyment of fundamental rights for women and men;
- Development of human capital (Female and Male) able to face the challenges of socioeconomic development, poverty reduction, African integration and globalization;
- Recognition of women's contribution to economic development by their involvement in the productive system and equal access to employment opportunities and production factors;
- Putting to use the potential of women and men in the country's development through their equal participation in decision-making spheres;
- Promotion, advocacy and communication to help egalitarian values and behaviour within Malian society to take root, while supporting traditions that help to meet the demands of modernity and openness to the world (meal preparation, housework, wood and water chores etc.);
- Taking gender into account as a guiding principle of good governance in the public policies and reforms that are most conducive to change as well as in budgets, taking into account the context of decentralization.

45. However, the considerable efforts exerted by the Government need to be supported, increased and improved in order to remove residual obstacles linked to ignorance of the law and to certain anachronistic traditional practices. Thus, the Government must further intensify efforts and take other steps of a political, legislative, and regulatory nature in order to give greater effectiveness to the rights of women and girls.

Article 6: Trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution

46. Mali has developed a national report on human trafficking. That report provides a survey of the situation, measures and actions undertaken at the national and subregional level and proposes an emergency plan of action for 2010-2012. That action plan, adopted in 2010, demonstrates political resolve to combat trafficking in women and exploitation of prostitution. It includes a number of measures aimed at better defining the phenomenon and its aspects, and undertaking coordinated action for prevention, prosecution, law enforcement and integration of victims. During 2012 the priority actions to be pursued are development and adoption of a specific law on human trafficking (a draft is before the National Assembly) and a national survey on internal and external forms of trafficking.

47. At the national level, certain provisions of the Penal Code need to be recalled:

- Article 244 defines and punishes trafficking in children (including girls). Any person convicted of trafficking is punished by imprisonment for five to twenty years;
- Article 228 treats paedophilia as a crime and punishes by five to twenty years' imprisonment and a fine of 20,000 to 1 million francs any act of sexual penetration or sexual touching of any kind on the person of a minor under 13 years of age, or any display for commercial or tourism purposes of photographs, films or drawings of a pornographic character portraying one or several persons under age 13;
- Article 229 of the Penal Code establishes penalties of six months' to three years' imprisonment and a fine of from 20,000 to 1,000,000 francs, with the additional option of one to ten years' banishment, for anyone who has habitually encouraged, promoted or facilitated debauchery or corrupted young people of either sex, or has led or induced a girl or woman into debauchery, even with her consent, for the purpose of satisfying other people's pleasures, or has held a person in a house of debauchery against his or her will or has compelled a person to engage in prostitution.

48. Anyone convicted of living in whole or in part off the avails of prostitution is subject to six months' to three years' imprisonment and a fine of from 20,000 to 1,000,000 francs. A further penalty of 5 to 10 years' banishment may be applied.

Article 7: Women in political and public life

49. Mali's Constitution makes no distinction between men and women so far as their participation in political and public life is concerned.

Actions taken have included:

- Review in 2006 of the Electoral Code, retaining among its criteria for the public funding of political parties the number of women elected within the party;
- Support for training of women candidates for various elections;
- Implementation of projects and programmes (United Nations support programme for the promotion of human and gender rights (PCDHG, PAREFH2, PAREFH3, PROJES and RECOFEM) which contribute to improving the status of women and women's participation in decision-making fora;
- Drafting and implementation of a national strategy in support of women candidates;
- Creating a project to support participation in good governance and women's rights;
- A National Strategy and 2012-2015 action plan for participation and greater representation of women in forthcoming general elections.

Results achieved

Table 1
Elected and appointed positions of responsibility by sex

	2008			*2009*		
Positions of responsibility	*Men*	*Women*	*% Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*% Women*
Elected						
Political party presidents	110	3	3%	121	3	2%
Member of parliament	132	15	10%	132	15	10%
National Councillor	69	6	8%	69	6	8%
Mayors	696	7	1%	695	8	1%
Councillors of a commune	10 054	720	6.7%	9 847	927	8.6%
Malian Chamber of Commerce and Industry bureau	13	0	0%	12	2	14.3%
Members of Association for the Promotion of Family Assistance	35	2	5.4%	–	–	–
Members of Women's Activities Support Fund	–	–	–	–	–	–
Appointed positions						
Ministers	20	7*	25.9%	23	8**	25.8%
Members of the Constitutional Court	6	3	33%	6	3	33%
Members of the Supreme Court	6	1	14%	6	1	14%
Members of Social, Economic & Cultural Council	51	7	12%	52	6	10%
Ambassadors	19	3	13.6%	26	4	13.3%
Secretaries General	26	0	0.0%	24	2	7.7%
Mediator of the Republic	0	1	100%	0	1	100%

Positions of responsibility	2008			2009		
	Men	Women	% Women	Men	Women	% Women
Directors of services (DN, DG, Administrative & Financial Services)	95+	6+	5.9%	262	29	10%
Directors of youth camps, youth advancement centres, stadiums	ND	ND	ND	18	2	10%

Source: National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child (CNDIFE).

50. Although there have been positive initiatives in support of women and strides have been noted in administrative, political and legal processes, the representation of women in decision-making fora remains insufficient. Mali falls well short of the norm of parity to which it has subscribed.

Table 2
Representation of women in elected and appointed governmental positions

Structures Posts Sectors	Sex				
	Men	%	Women	%	Total
Minister	26	83.87	5	16.12	31
Governor of region	9	100	0	0	9
Ambassador	33	91.66	3	8.33	36
Consul general	8	100	0	0	8
Embassy counsellor	107	89.16	13	10.83	120
National director	226	84.4	43	15.98	269
Secretary general	27	87.09	4	12.90	31
Chef de cabinet	27	87.09	4	12.90	31
Technical advisor	99	80.84	24	19.51	123
Head of Mission	73	81.11	17	18.88	90
National Assembly	123	83.6	14	9.5	147
Supreme Court	38	84.44	7	15.55	45
Constitutional Court	5	55.55	4	44.44	9
Economic, Social and Cultural Council	67	90.5	7	9.4	74
Supreme Council of the Communities	91	91	9	9	100
National Councillor	67	91.7	6	8.21	73
Communal Councillor	9 844		928	8.66%	10 772
Mayor	695		08		
National Independent Electoral Commission	13	86.6	02	13.33	15
Regional Councillor	08	100	0	0	08
High Court of Justice	09	81.81	02	18.18	11
Federation of Malian Farmers' Associations	42	91.3	4	8.7	46
Federation of Malian professional associations	16	88.9	2	11.1	18
Malian Chamber of Commerce and Industry	11	84.6	2	15.4	13

Structures Posts Sectors	Sex				Total
	Men	%	Women	%	
National Council of Malian Employers	18	90	02	10	20
National Council of Rural Workers Organizations	08	80	2	20	10
Courts of first instance	10	100	0	0	10
Justice of the peace with expanded jurisdiction	42	100	0	0	42
Police officer	300	99.99	02	0.7	302
Customs officer	337	80	84	20	421

Source: Statistical Bulletin, National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child *(2009-2010-2012)/Beijing + 10 & + 20 and documentary research*.

Article 8: International representation and participation

51. There is no specific policy in place aimed at helping women obtain posts in international organizations.

52. Nevertheless, there are a few posts in international organizations that are held by Malian women:

- UNFPA in Côte d'Ivoire, African Economic Conference in Addis Ababa, International Criminal Court, The Hague, Netherlands
- WHO in Geneva; African Union (Special Rapporteur, Committee on Women's Rights), Court of Justice of ECOWAS, UNDP in Burkina Faso, West African Economic and Monetary Union in Burkina Faso, UNIDO, and four woman ambassadors: Gabon, Senegal, Japan and Germany.

53. Discussions have taken place on the drafting of a quota law. The draft allocates 30 per cent of appointed and elected positions to the less represented sex.

Article 9: Women's rights in regard to nationality

54. Act No. 2011-087/ of 30 December 2011 enacting the Personal and Family Code establishes equality between men and women with regard to nationality by providing in article 224 that the following are Malian whether born in Mali or abroad:

- A legitimate child born of a Malian father and mother;
- A legitimate child born of a Malian father or mother whose other parent is stateless or of unknown nationality;
- Illegitimate children, when the parent to whom filiation is established first is Malian;
- Illegitimate children, when the parent to whom filiation is established second is Malian, if the other parent is stateless or of unknown nationality;
- A child born of a Malian father or mother and a parent who is foreign, unless the child repudiates Malian nationality within six months after reaching adulthood in accordance with articles 255 and 256 of this Code.

55. A married woman has the option of acquiring her husband's nationality, but is not compelled to do so, according to article 232 of the Personal and Family Code, which reads as follows: a foreign father or mother of any Malian child may acquire Malian nationality if he or she resides in Mali for at least one year, in accordance with articles 255 and 256 of this Code.

Article 10: Education

1. Measures in favour of girls

56. To help improve the situation of girls the Government of Mali has taken several measures.

57. Those measures include, in particular:

(a) Adoption by the Malian Government of a National Policy on schooling for girls in August 2007 together with an action plan for the period 2007-2009 for an amount of 16,950,000,000 CFA francs;

(b) Adoption of a policy on non-formal education in January 2007 which gives an important place to girls who have not been schooled or have dropped out of school;

(c) Review of contents of programmes and textbooks in primary education with a view to better reflecting aspects specific to girls. Modules devoted to "gender" have been included in the training programmes of primary education teachers;

(d) The building of washrooms, playgrounds and other facilities specifically for girls. As part of the Education Sector Investment Programme I and II, 6,685 infrastructure projects of this kind were completed by the National Investment Agency for the Territorial Units (ANCIT) and other participants during the 2008-2009 school year, and another 4,432 projects are planned for 2009-2010. These washrooms, playgrounds and other facilities specifically for girls are placed at an appropriate distance from those for boys;

(e) Prohibition under internal regulations of all forms of discrimination or practices based on sex, all forms of violence (insults, bullying, licentious acts, gestures or speech) and all violations of the Rights of the Child;

(f) Effective implementation of an awareness campaign to promote education of girls and to encourage girls to take up the teaching profession, through the media, opinion leaders, parent-teacher associations, women's associations, women parliamentarians, and so forth;

(g) Crediting girls with 2 bonus points to facilitate their obtaining study grants;

(h) The monitoring of girls in higher education provided by NGOs (Soroptimist, Malian Association of Women Engineers);

(i) The building of school canteens (658 public, 48 private, 88 community and 17 for medersas, i.e. a total of 811 in 2008 for 17,277 children);

(j) Creation of literacy centres and establishment of literacy programmes for women in all regions of the country and in Bamako District;

(k) Creation of Functional Literacy Centres (1,811 centres in 2008 serving 61,057 enrolled auditors, of whom 40 per cent are women; 3,343 instructors of

whom 46 per cent are women and 24,050 newly literate, of whom 24 per cent are women);

(l) Creation of Centres of Education for Development (2,420 centres created in 2006 and 1,302 in 2008, serving 31,747 students of whom 49 per cent are girls, and 1,363 teachers of whom 24 per cent are women).

Results and constraints:

58. All of the activities conducted have contributed to a positive trend in indicators of schooling for girls.

59. School enrolment of girls has increased: 53.7 per cent in 2002-2003, 65.1 per cent in 2005-2006, 68.0 per cent in 2006-2007, 70.7 per cent in 2007-2008, 73 per cent in 2008-2009, 71.8 per cent in 2009-2010 and 74.0 per cent in 2010-2011.

60. In spite of the progress that has been made, there is still a considerable gap between boys and girls.

61. In 2007-2008, 42.9 per cent of girls finished primary school and 23.1 per cent finished secondary; in 2010-2011 the proportions were 51 per cent for primary and 29.10 per cent for secondary.

62. In 2004-2005, 8.7 per cent of girls dropped out of primary school. This rate changed to 9.8 per cent in 2005-2006 and 9.45 in 2006-2007, and 9.7 per cent in 2007-2008.

63. With regard to female literacy, the rate increased from 15.9 per cent in 2003 to 18.2 per cent in 2006.

64. A major constraint remains providing outlets for girls who have finished the programme offered by the Centres for Education in Support of Development (CEDs). Apart from such traditional work as nurse-matrons or association administrators, the job opportunities available to women in the villages are very limited.

65. The dropout rate due to early marriage of girls presents a major challenge for the Government.

66. The low literacy rate is due to certain limiting factors that are often complex, in particular:

- The fact that the course curriculum is not specifically tailored to women's needs;
- The excessive workload of women in rural areas;
- Sociocultural constraints (husbands' refusal to allow their wives to attend classes, social division of labour, etc.);
- A lack of teaching materials and women's inability to afford them;
- The fact that women are not free to take classes as a result of having a large number of closely-spaced pregnancies.

1.1 Primary education

Table 3
Evolution of the gross school enrolment ratio by gender and by level of education

Level of education	*Sex*	*2002 2003*	*2003 2004*	*2004 2005*	*2005 2006*	*2006 2007*	*2007 2008*	*2008 2009*	*2009 2010*	*2010 2011*
Preschool	Girl									
	Boy									
Primary	Girls	56.4%	59.9%	63.4%	65.1%	68.0%	70.7%	73.0%	71.8%	74.0%
	Boys	77.6%	81.3%	85%	85.1%	87.5%	89.5%	91.2%	87.4%	89.1%
Middle	Girls	21.7%	25.4%	28.5%	31.1%	34.1%	36.6%	39.6%	41.8%	46.0%
	Boys	38.5%	43.7%	47.7%	52.21%	54.9%	55.3%	59.9%	60.0%	63.9%
General Secondary	Girls	25.45%	31.27%	32.37%	32.63%	32.6%	32.5%			
	Boys	74.55%	68.73%	67.63%	67.37%	67.4%	67.5%			
Technical & vocational secondary	Girls	44.99%	40.52%	40.47%	40.94%	39.5%	39.9%			
	Boys	55.01%	59.48%	59.53%	59.06%	60.5%	60.1%			

Source: EDUCATION_MEN-CPS_Report: Assessment of National Educational System.

Article 11: Employment, right to work, social security, choice of occupation

1. Elimination of discrimination in general

(a) The right to work as an inalienable right of all human beings

67. The laws of the Republic of Mali do not contain any provision that discriminates between men and women in regard to their inalienable right to work.

68. Article 19 of Mali's 1992 constitution provides that everyone has an equal right to work and to rest.

Law 92-020 of 23 September 1992, establishing the Labour Code, defines a worker and in so doing makes no distinction between men and women.

(b) Application of the same criteria for selection in matters of employment

69. The composition of the civil service changed from 78.8 per cent men and 21.2 per cent women in 2002 to 73.3 per cent men and 26.7 per cent women in 2008.

Table 4
Make-up of the civil service by category and sex, 2008

	Men		*Women*		
Category	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Total*
A	8 666	85.5	1 466	14.5	10 132
B2	11 009	74.5	3 763	25.5	14 772
B1	2 924	60.4	1 918	39.6	4 842
C	2 742	64.8	1 488	35.2	4 230
Contractual	11 051	70.5	4 635	29.5	15 686
Total	**36 392**	**73.3**	**13 270**	**26.7**	**49 662**

Source: Statistical Bulletin, National Centre for Documentation and Information on Women and the Child, 2008.

70. There are more women at the lower levels of the civil service. The number of women in higher-ranking jobs is barely one fourth the number of men. This can be explained by several factors, particularly the fact that girls receive less schooling than boys, women's lack of qualifications and prejudices against women holding certain jobs.

71. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the number of women in category A nearly doubled between 2002 and 2008 (806 in 2002 and 1466 in 2008).

72. Moreover, the National Gendarmerie and the National Guard, which were reserved solely to men, have been opened up to women since 2006. The same is true of Civil Defence in 2008.

(c) Right to receive vocational training and retraining

73. Occupational training is a right for all public servants without discrimination. In the private sector, it is conducted haphazardly, which makes it difficult to gather overall statistics and to disaggregate them by sex.

Table 5
Civil servants receiving training, by category and by sex, 2008

	Men		*Women*		
Category	*Number*	*%*	*Number*	*%*	*Total*
A	294	88.3	39	11.7	333
B2	800	82.3	172	17.7	972
B1	144	69.92	64	30.8	208
C	88	58.3	63	41.7	151
Contractual	13	81.3	3	18.8	16
Total	**1 339**	**79.7**	**341**	**20.3**	**1 980**

Sources: ANPE_DOEF: National Employment Agency, Department of Employment and Training: Study of the structure of employment in the civil service, 2008.

74. Among civil servants who are in training, only 20 per cent are women. The differences in proportion are quite significant from one category to another: 42 per cent women in category C by contrast to 12 per cent in category A.

(d) Right to equality of remuneration

75. Law 92-020 of 23 September 1992, establishing the Labour Code provides in article L95 that all workers — given the same working conditions, the same occupational qualifications and the same output — will receive equal pay regardless of their origin, sex, age or status.

76. Mali ratified ILO Convention 100 on equality of remuneration in 1964. Despite legislative and regulatory provisions favourable to equality of remuneration, women are paid less than men, as the table below illustrates.

77. According to the document EPAM/2007/DOEF/ANPE, women are more numerous in the salary range between 29,000 and 50,000 CFA francs, by contrast with men, who receive higher remuneration. This situation is even more patent in rural settings.

Table 12
Distribution of employed according to monthly remuneration and branch of activity

	% employed		*Less than 29.000 CFA Francs*	
Branch of activity	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*
Agriculture, livestock breeding, hunting, forestry	56.7	65.2	68%	43%
Commerce, repair of vehicles and articles	20.2	10.6	73%	30%
Production activities	10.6	6.7	88%	35%
Housework, domestic service	7.2	0.5	62%	75%
Extractive industries	1.8	2.0	79%	36%
Hotels, restaurants	0.6	0.2	78%	36%
Personal or collective activities	0.6	0.5	77%	19%
Public administration	0.5	1.8	0%	8%
Education	0.5	2.3	13%	8%
Fishing, fish farming, aquaculture	0.4	2.0	24%	31%
Health and social action	0.4	0.9	27%	25%
Real estate, rentals & services to enterprises	0.2	0.9	55%	27%
Production & distribution of electricity and water	0.1	0.1	0%	0%
Construction	0.1	3.0	100%	25%
Transports and communications	0.1	2.8	0%	14%
Finance	0.1	0.1	0%	0%
Total	**100**	**100**	**70%**	**37%**

Source: Continuous Survey of Households, 2007.

Distribution of employed according to sex, place of residence and income from work

Unit: CFA Franc (CFAF)

	Men		*Women*	
Income	*Urban*	*Rural*	*Urban*	*Rural*
Less than 29,000 CFAF	62 952	483 486	120 149	500 486
29,000 CFAF	1 936	14 440	3 553	12 375
29,000, 50,000	130 897	331 179	46 671	155 596
50,000, 75,000	70 265	163 811	19 114	55 067
75,000, 100,000	52 868	96 350	17 660	25 891
100,000, 200,000	78 753	106 832	16 089	20 589
200,000, 500,000	21 780	35 341	8 009	8 960
Over 500,000 FCFA	5 419	22 275	1 714	9 974
None	32 456	484 062	15 311	339 213
ND	93 191	329 646	60 836	253 099
Total	**550 517**	**2 067 422**	**309 106**	**1 381 250**

Source: 2010 Continuous Survey of Households/National Employment Agency.

(e) The right to social security and the right to retirement, unemployment, sickness, invalidity and old-age benefits

78. Social protection in Mali remains insufficient in terms of coverage and benefits provided, despite the existence of traditional institutions such as the National Social Welfare Institute and the Mali Retirement Fund, and the growth of mutual savings and loan institutions. At present, only about 10 per cent of the population enjoys formal social protection coverage and the benefits extend only to certain areas.

79. These laws do not discriminate in any way between men and women regarding access to social security services.

80. With regard to medical coverage for unemployed persons, there is still a legal vacuum.

(f) The right to protection of health and to safety in working conditions, including the safeguarding of the function of reproduction

81. The labour code in force in Mali provides for protection of women in so far as their safety while performing certain dangerous work is concerned, especially night work in industry.

82. These provisions have been strengthened by the decree and the application order of the said implementing law.

83. Further, in 2008, Mali ratified ILO Convention 183 concerning maternity protection, which strengthened the legal protection of working women.

2. Prevention of discrimination on the grounds of marriage, maternity or marital status

(a) Prohibition of dismissal on the grounds of pregnancy, maternity or marital status

84. The Labour Code does not list marital status among the grounds for dismissal. The labour services have not reported any dispute relating to dismissal on the ground of marital status.

(b) Maternity leave and related provisions

85. The Labour Code establishes that a pregnant woman is entitled to 14 weeks of maternity leave.

86. Article L181 of the Labour Code provides that a woman is entitled to an extension of leave for 3 weeks in the event of medically certified illness resulting from pregnancy or labour.

87. ILO Convention 183, ratified by Mali, provides that a woman who takes maternity leave may return to her post at the end of the leave. This prevents employers from revoking a woman's employment by reason of maternity.

88. It should be noted that there are fifteen (15) inter-company health-care centres throughout the country. These centres provide medical monitoring (medical examination at time of hiring, periodic checkups of workers following an annual programme) and inspection of working conditions (company visits).

(c) Provision of the necessary supporting social services to enable parents to combine family obligations with work responsibilities

89. Article L124 of the Labour Code establishes that a woman has the right to rest times at her workplace for the purpose of breastfeeding her child, for a period of 15 months following the child's birth, without any reduction in remuneration. During this period, a mother may terminate her employment contract, and if she does so she is required to give her employer only 24 hours' advance notice and is not required to pay any compensation for the short notice.

90. Under article 189-11, paragraph 5, of the decree implementing the Labour Code, every establishment employing more than 25 women is obliged to set up a special room for breast-feeding.

91. However, child care centres are no longer satisfying demand and efforts are needed to increase the number of child care facilities in urban centres, but also to create them regionally and locally.

Article 12: Health and family planning

1. Combating discrimination in the area of health care and in access to medical services, including family planning

92. Mali's health policy is founded on the principle set forth in article 17 which makes health a right of every Malian citizen. Article 2 of Law 02-049 of 22 July 2002 concerning the Health Guidelines Act provides as follows: "The nation's health policy is based on the fundamental principles of equity, justice, solidarity and participation by the people and by civil society."

- The Health Guidelines Act reaffirms the aims set out in the sectoral health and population policy adopted in 1991, which was renewed under the Decennial Health and Social Development Plan 1998-2007: To assure the ongoing improvement of family welfare and the situation of the general population, and particularly of women and children;
- To extend health coverage by making health services accessible to the general population, and particularly women and children;
- To ensure that the system works well and produces a high standard of results;
- To promote healthy attitudes and behaviours that will have a favourable impact on family welfare.

93. The efforts exerted in recent years by the health sector have brought about an improvement in the health of Mali's population. For example, the results of the fourth Demographic and Health Survey (EDS-IV) show that:

- The rate of child mortality has declined to 191 per thousand live births in 2006 as compared with 229.1 in 2001 (EDS-III) and 237.5 in 1996 (EDS-II).
- The rate of infant mortality has declined to 96 in 2006 as compared with 113.4 in 2001 and 122.5 in 1996, thanks in particular to the Expanded Programme on Immunization and the programme against malnutrition.
- The maternal mortality rate has declined to 464 per 100,000 in 2006, compared with 582 per 100,000 in 2001.
- Finally, HIV/AIDS prevalence in the population aged 15 to 49 has declined to 1.3 per cent in 2006 (EDSM-IV) compared with 1.7 per cent in 2001 (EDSM III).

94. Despite these advances, the health situation of the Malian population remains worrisome. Like many countries in the West African sub-region, it is still characterized by:

- The persistence of high maternal and child morbidity and mortality. According to the EDSM-IV survey of 2006, maternal mortality was 464 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. Infant mortality (children less than one year old) is 96 per 1000 and child mortality 191 per 1,000;
- The predominance of parasitic infections and nutritional deficits, particularly among women and children;
- The emergence of non-communicable diseases (cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, sickle-cell anaemia, etc.);
- Under-utilization and under-equipping of health services;
- A shortage of staff, who are too few in number, inadequately motivated, and inefficiently deployed;
- Inadequate funding of the health sector.

2. Major achievements and commitments with regard to reproductive health

95. To face the challenges and reach the goals of the millennium, Mali has adopted a document entitled the "COMPACT" (Cadre unique et harmonisé pour l'augmentation et l'amélioration de l'efficacité de l'aide dans le secteur de la

Santé/"Single Harmonized Framework to Enhance Effectiveness of Aid in the Health Sector") which seeks to combine funding from the Government and partners in the framework of a national health sector plan geared to results in terms of the Decennial Health and Social Development Plan (PRODESS).

96. Reproductive health is a health policy priority in Mali. Accordingly, the country has made major efforts on that score.

97. Among the initiatives undertaken in the framework of the Decennial Health and Social Development Plan (PRODESS II) to achieve the MDGs, most of which are a part of the COMPACT, the following should be noted:

- The Strategic Reproductive Health Plan (2004-2008);
- The road map to accelerate the reduction of maternal and neonatal mortality (with the motto "Hoping for life for a mother and her baby, Mali forges ahead to 2015");
- The action plan for audits on maternal deaths (2005-2006) and its extension, with the scheduled introduction of neonatal deaths;
- Initiative for the prevention of post-partum haemorrhaging, particularly the generalization of the GATPA strategy (active management of the third stage of labour) and its extension to trained midwives;
- Coverage without charge of caesarean section;
- The national programme of Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care, with the integration of the newborn (SONU: 2004-2008);
- The national strategic plan for adolescent reproductive health;
- Treatment of malaria provided free of charge for children under 5 years of age and for pregnant women (June 2007);
- Treatment of malaria without charge by Technical Centres for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation for children ages 0 to 5 and SP (sulfadoxine-pyrimethamine) for all pregnant women;
- Distribution without charge of insecticide-treated mosquito nets to children and pregnant women;
- The ten-year plan on safe contraception (2002-2011);
- The action plan to reposition family planning (2005) and the Family Planning Repositioning Weeks;
- Development of a "Guide for Constructive Involvement by Men in Reproductive Health";
- The programme of post-abortion care (adopted in 2006);
- The Malian strategy for prevention and treatment of obstetric fistula;
- The 2005-2009 sectoral plan to combat HIV/AIDS;
- The strategic communication plan for reproductive health (2006-2011);
- The PMTCT (prevention of mother-to-child transmission) programme (2002);

- Research on preventing malaria among pregnant women with TPI and SP at the community centres and health centres at Kolondièba; research on management of asphyxia at birth at the community level;
- As part of the national programme to combat excision (2002) the development of a "Trainer's Guide" and a Provider's Manual on the medical, psychosocial and legal treatment of complications related to female genital mutilation/excision;
- Medical treatment without charge of AIDS-related illnesses (especially ARVs) and persons living with HIV;
- Decentralizing treatment of AIDS-related illnesses and persons living with HIV;
- In the institutional domain, in addition to legislative and regulatory measures, the following should be noted:
    - Institutionalization of a national day for safer childbirth;
    - Introduction of "nutrition activities focus weeks" (semaines d'intensification des activités de nutrition — SIAN);
    - Creation of the "Tara Boiré Prize" rewarding initiatives in support of safer childbirth;
- Design of several advocacy instruments relating to reproductive health and HIV;
- Creation of a framework for cooperation with religious leaders, the Network of Traditional Communicators (RECOTRADE), and the media;
- Development of partnerships with civil society (agreements with NGOs, cooperation with private organizations);
- Finally, adoption in late 2009 of a national policy for the development of human resources in the area of health.

3. Provision of appropriate services to women during pregnancy, confinement and the post-natal period

98. Law 02-049 of 22 July 2002 concerning the Health Guidelines Act creates the following health-care establishments:

- Public hospitals;
- Health-care referral centres (or district hospitals);
- Private health clinics, comprising both for-profit clinics and not-for-profit clinics, as well as community health centres, denominational centres, etc.

3.1 Situation of health-care coverage

99. The aims of the sectoral health policy, namely to place services as near as possible to users, have nearly been accomplished, even though efforts are still needed to improve affordability. As of 31 December 2009, 54 per cent of the total population lived within 5 km of an operating community health centre providing the minimum package of services.

Table 6
Percentage of population living within 5 km of a health centre by region

Poverty Zones	*Regions*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009**
Zone I	Koulikoro	36	49	49	46
	Sikasso	49	59	59	45
	Ségou	49	56	56	50
	Mopti	43	46	46	49
	Subtotal zone I	44	46	53	47
Zone II	Kayes	44	49	51	51
	Tombouctou	41	39	39	38
	Gao	50	57	57	40
	Kidal	24	31	31	37
	Subtotal zone II	40	44	49	46
Zone III	Bamako	100	99	99	94
	Total Mali	51	58	58	54

Source: National Health Directorate, Local Health Information Systems.

100. The proportions range from 37 per cent in Kidal to 94 per cent in Bamako District. It should be noted that in the northern regions of the country the dispersed population and its mobility make it difficult to improve provision of access to health care within 5 km by building community health centres. The slow growth of coverage in certain localities is essentially due to the low concentration of covered population in new functional health areas.

101. Zone I (a poor zone) experienced a decline of six points (53 per cent to 47 per cent), zone II three points (49 per cent to 46 per cent) and zone III a drop of five points.

Table 7
Evolution of community health centres by region

	Planned	*Completed*			
Regions	*PDSEC*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009**
Kayes	183	130	141	156	167
Koulikoro	167	107	116	120	156
Sikasso	186	152	153	156	188
Ségou	167	134	145	148	165
Mopti	128	109	112	118	134
Tombouctou	77	51	51	53	67
Gao	93	43	49	48	55
Kidal	13	7	7	7	52
Bamako	56	52	52	52	9
Total	**1 070**	**785**	**826**	**858**	**993**

Source: National Health Directorate, Local Health Information Systems.

102. In general there has been a yearly increase in the number of community health centres. The number has risen from 785 in 2006 to 993 in 2009, with 135 new centres counted in 2009. The overall rate of completion in relation to the target defined by the Ten Year Health Sector Development Plan (PRODESS II) is about 93 per cent of the 1,070 community health centres planned in the development programme (Programme de Développement Social, Economique et Culturel — PDSEC).

Referral and evacuation:

- Arrangements for referral and evacuation have been set up in all health-care districts (health circles or zones) around the Referral Health Centres (Centre de Santé de Référence — CSREF), using perinatal services as the entry point. Each centre has at least one all-terrain ambulance connected to the community health centre by radio. The aim is to facilitate access to and coverage of obstetric emergency care. It is in this context that the Government has decided to provide caesarean sections free of charge in all public service facilities and military hospitals.
- There are 51 Comprehensive Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care units and 55 Basic Emergency Obstetric and Neonatal Care units (in the community health centres).
- All hospitals second and third in line for referrals are categorized as *Etablissements Hospitaliers* (EPH) and granted management autonomy. The technical base of most public health and community health structures has been strengthened (construction and/or refurbishment or extension, technical medical equipment, qualified human resources, logistics, especially ambulances, etc.).

103. **With regard to human resources**, the ratio of number of inhabitants per staff member in each personnel category remains below the standards because there are national ratios which include the personnel of central services.

- 1 doctor per 7,256 inhabitants (9,257 in Bamako and 14,511 as a regional average)
- 1 midwife per 10,763 inhabitants (5,478 in Bamako and 21,520 as a regional average)
- 1 nurse/medical assistant per 1,930 inhabitants (2,801 in Bamako and 3,860 as a regional average).

104. There are substantial disparities between regions due to inefficient distribution and/or to low population density.

105. Despite efforts in terms of expansion of coverage, there are differences in the use of services between urban and rural areas. Health services are not very accessible to women. Several factors contribute to these differences:

- Geographic access to the facilities;
- Affordability, in some cases;
- Cultural pressures;
- Ignorance, inadequate or inaccessible information;
- Etc.

106. Analysis of the tables below provides further information on the health status of rural Malian women.

107. Further, women do not find health-care services readily accessible.

108. The tables below shed further light on the health status of rural Malian women.

3.2 Total fertility rate:

According to the latest demographic and health survey (EDSM-IV 2006), the fertility rate of Mali is 6.6 children per woman. It was 6.7 in 2001. The median interval between successive births is 32 months. The EDSM-IV survey showed that 36 per cent of women aged 15 to 19 year are already mothers or expectant.

Prenatal consultation

Table 8
Proportion of births receiving the benefit of a prenatal consultation during the pregnancy, according to EDSM, EDSM-II and IV

Area of residence	*EDSM-II (1995/96)*	*EDSM III (2000/01)*	*EDSM IV (2006)*
Urban	80.6%	86.9%	86.9%
Rural	35.3%	47.2%	63.8%

109. With regard to prenatal consultations, there has been an improvement in coverage.

Table 9
Evolution of coverage of prenatal care from 2004 to 2009

Regions	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Kayes	71%	76%	82%	78	83%	86%
Koulikoro	65%	70%	73%	77	82%	87%
Sikasso	78%	74%	78%	81	84%	89%
Ségou	96%	81%	80%	83	90%	94%
Mopti	77%	75%	64%	77	82%	88%
Tombouctou	35%	46%	52%	64	75%	80%
Gao	30	50%	57%	60	58%	76%
Kidal	30	43%	35%	26	48%	49%
Bamako	88	91%	90%	85	94%	102%
Total	75%	75%	75%	78%	84%	90%

Source: National Health Directorate: statistical yearbooks of the local health information system.

110. This table shows that the trend is towards improvement, since the routine situation is not at variance with that observed through the EDSM-IV of 2006.

3.3 Attended births

- The rate of births attended by a midwife or nurse is higher in urban than in rural areas. This indicates an inadequate allocation of human resources, which is detrimental to women living in rural areas. However, whether childbirth is attended by qualified personnel depends on where it takes place, and in 66 per cent of cases it takes place at home, with traditional midwives in attendance. This is why they are taken into account in reproductive health activities with respect to referral of at-risk cases.
- Because of the role played by nurse-matrons in attended births, the Government has decided to incorporate them into the GATPA strategy (active management of the third stage of labour) which aims to reduce the number of deaths due to postpartum haemorrhage.

111. As with prenatal consultations and the organization of referral-evacuation, there has been an improvement in the rate of attended births.

Table 10
Evolution of rate of coverage of attended births by region

Regions	*2004*	*2005*	*2006*	*2007*	*2008*	*2009*
Kayes	34	40	42%	50%	57%	58%
Koulikoro	45	53	58%	61%	64%	67%
Sikasso	66	64	59%	67%	66%	71%
Ségou	49	50	55%	60%	61%	63%
Mopti	30	34	40%	37%	42%	44%
Tombouctou	18	24	27%	35%	31%	33%
Gao	17	20	22%	22%	22%	24%
Kidal	17	18	24%	17%	35%	29%
Bamako	94	97	99%	97%	96%	97%
Total	49	53	55%	59%	61%	64%

Source: National Health Directorate: statistical yearbooks of the local health information system.

112. Despite efforts with regard to health-care coverage and numerous information and awareness campaigns, many births take place at home.

113. Caesarean section has in effect been free of charge since late 2005. In 2008, the Government made available to the Referral Health Centre (Centres de Santé de Référence) and hospitals 16,500 intervention kits for simple C-sections and 3,042 for C-sections with complications. This made it possible for 13,711 Caesarean sections to be performed in 2008.

3.4 Post-natal consultation

114. This is an under-developed area, for new mothers do not appreciate the importance of post-natal care despite the information campaigns and IEC sessions conducted in all the health regions. Yet it is recognized that a large proportion of maternal deaths and deaths of newborns occur within 48 hours after childbirth. All of the communication and social mobilization strategies adopted have met with

cultural barriers, such as the belief that a new mother should not go out until after the baptism, i.e. a week after the birth.

115. According to the EDSM-IV survey in 2006, 72.2 per cent of women who gave birth outside of a health-care facility did not have any post-natal visits, compared with 84 per cent for EDSM-III in 2001. In Bamako, 51 per cent of women did not have any post-natal visits.

116. A post-natal assessment was done within two days after giving birth in only 18.2 per cent of cases in 2006, compared to 10 per cent in 2001, within three to six days after giving birth in 1.7 per cent per cent of cases, compared with 1 per cent in 2001, and within seven to 41 days after giving birth in 4.4 per cent of cases compared with 2 per cent in 2001.

3.5 Family planning

117. It is believed that the prevalence of contraception shown by the results of demographic health surveys indicates the real prevalence at the time of the survey because it takes into account the data concerning all other non-state actors (NGOs, private associations).

118. As shown by the results of the EDSM III and IV surveys done in 2001 and 2006, contraceptive prevalence has evolved:

Table 11
Contraceptive coverage between 2001 and 2006

	EDSM-III (2001)		*EDSM-IV (2006)*	
Year Regions	*Modern methods*	*All methods*	*Modern methods*	*All methods*
Bamako	19.2	23.3	16.9	19.6
Kayes	4.6	6.1	5.1	6.2
Koulikoro	4.3	7.0	6.8	8.9
Sikasso	4.8	6.5	6	6.5
Ségou	3.3	7.3	7.0	9.4
Mopti	2.4	3.5	2	2.2
Tombouctou	5.5	4.0	4.3	4.6
Gao	5.5	4.0	4.4	5.1
Kidal	5.5	4.0	8.6	9.3
All Mali		8.1		8.2
Urban		17.8		15.2
Rural		4.9		5.1

Sources: Health Centres & National Health Directorate: Malian Demographic and Health Surveys, reports, 2001 & 2006).

119. Contraceptive coverage showed little change from 2001 to 2006 according to data from the two EDSM surveys (III and IV). There was even a downward trend in urban settings (17.8 per cent in 2001 as compared with 15.2 per cent in 2006 i.e. 2.6 per cent less) while there was a slight upward trend during the same period in rural settings.

120. However, it is necessary to stress the difficulty of specifying this indicator even by means of surveys, in light of the sensitivity of the issue and the discretion that is required in practice. With other actors intervening in this matter, it is advisable to set up an appropriate system for data collection.

121. All public and community services, several NGOs, and village centres provide family planning services. However, the rates of usage of such services are low. According to the annual statistical data of the health information system, the rate of contraceptive use is quite low.

122. Despite the lifting of restrictions on access to family planning methods, contraceptive prevalence remains very low. The health information system does not collect all the data related to the operations of all players but only those from the results of the activities of local public health services (Referral Health Centres, Community Health Centres). This should be supplemented with those of the private sector and NGOs working in the field.

3.6 Abortion

123. Article 211 of the Penal Code prohibits all abortions except those performed for therapeutic reasons as listed in article 13 of Law 02-044 of 22 June 2000 concerning reproductive health, namely:

- When abortion is necessary to protect the life of the mother;
- When the pregnancy is the result of rape or incest.

124. Since it is prohibited, little reliable statistical data on abortion are available, but it is evident that the practice continues to be used to terminate unwanted pregnancies.

3.7 Sexually Transmitted Diseases/HIV-AIDS

125. The fourth demographic and health survey (EDSM-IV) of 2006 indicates a national seroprevalence rate of 1.3 per cent in the general population, as compared with 1.7 per cent in 2001 according to survey EDSM-III.

Table 12
HIV prevalence by gender and by region in 2001-2006

	Prevalence in 2001 (EDSM III)			*Prevalence in 2006 (EDSM IV)*		
Gender Regions	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*
Bamako	2.4	2.7	2.5	2.3	1.5	1.9
Kayes	2.4	1.3	1.9	1.2	0.0	0.7
Koulikoro	2.3	1.3	1.9	1.0	1.6	1.2
Sikasso	1.4	0.4	1.0	0.9	0.2	0.6
Ségou	2.5	1.4	1.9	1.7	0.8	1.3
Mopti	1.7	1.0	1.4	1.9	0.8	1.4
Tombouctou	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.5
Gao	0.8	0.7	0.7	0.8	1.4	1.1
Kidal	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	0.0	0.6
Total Mali	2.0	1.3	1.7	1.4	1.0	1.3

126. As in 2001, prevalence is higher among women (1.5 per cent) than among men (1.0 per cent).

127. Bamako is still the hardest-hit region (1.9 per cent) followed by Mopti (1.4 per cent), followed by Ségou (1.3 per cent) and Koulikoro (1.2 per cent).

128. Prevalence is highest among the most fit and sexually active groups, especially women, as illustrated by the following table:

Gender Age groups	*Women*	*Men*	*Total*
15-19 years	0.6	0.7	0.6
20-24 years	1.3	0.8	1.1
25-29 years	2.0	0.6	1.5
30-34 years	2.2	2.2	2.2
35-39 years	2.2	0.6	1.5
40-44 years	1.9	1.9	1.9
45-49 years	1.2	0.8	1.0
50-59 years	na	1.7	na
Total	1.5	1.0	1.3

Source: Malian Demographic and Health Surveys: EDSM-IV 2006.

129. As in 2001, the age groups most affected in 2006 are 30-34 years (2.2 per cent) followed by 40-44 (1.9 per cent) and 25-29 (1.5 per cent). Among women prevalence rises with age: 1.3 per cent for ages 20-24, 2 per cent for 25-29, and 2.2 per cent for those 30-24 and 35-39 years of age, then 1.9 per cent for ages 40-44. Women are more at risk for AIDS owing to certain sociocultural and socioeconomic factors, in particular levirate marriage, illiteracy and extreme poverty.

130. Initiatives taken since 2004 have made it possible to increase the supply of services in terms of screening and in terms of prevention of mother-to-child transmission and medical coverage. The 2009 report of the Ministry of Health committee to combat AIDS indicates that:

- The number of voluntary screening centres as of 31 December 2008 is 260, of which 178 are private and community centres;
- In 2008 there were 172 sites providing prevention of mother-child transmission of which 63 provided overall care and 30 provided paediatric care;
- In 2009 there were 203,615 screenings, of which:
  - 82,196 through voluntary screening (2,493 positives);
  - 86,825 screened through prevention of mother-child transmission (1,614 positives);
  - 34,594 screenings prescribed in treatment settings (10,971 positives);
- In late 2008, 23,754 patients were started on antiretroviral therapy, of whom 94.6 per cent were adults and 5.4 per cent children, or just over the 2008

forecasts of the Ministry of Health's 2005-2010 sector plan, which was for 21,000 patients;

- In December, 2009, 29260 patients were started on antiretroviral therapy, of whom 21,200 were regularly followed through ARV, i.e. a compliance rate of 72.10 per cent;
- The distribution of patients by gender is given in the table below.

131. Women were in a majority in the cohort and accounted for 65 per cent both among the patients started on the therapy and among patients regularly receiving ARV. The rate of compliance is higher among women. Comprehensive coverage is available in all regions of Mali.

132. Women receiving ARV outnumber men because they have a higher rate of seroprevalence than men and also because, in addition to the screenings at voluntary screening centres and prescribed screenings at clinics, the screenings done for prevention of mother-to-child transmission affect only women.

3.8 Harmful practices

133. Mali regards the following 16 practices as harmful to the health of women and children:

- Excision
- Scarification
- Filing of teeth
- Cionectomy
- Tattooing
- Bloodletting
- The use of aphrodisiacs by women
- Depigmentation
- Forced marriage and/or marriage at a very young age
- Levirate and sororate marriages
- Nutritional taboos
- Forced feeding
- Starvation diet prior to marriage
- The killing of babies that are orphans or are born outside marriage
- Practices that humiliate women during difficult deliveries
- Physical violence against women

134. In fighting these harmful practices, special emphasis has been placed on excision and early marriage, which contribute significantly to increasing mother and child mortality and morbidity rates, it is a prime cause of difficulties in childbirth, and it often produces irreversible disabilities (vesico-vaginal fistulas).

135. Excision is a very old practice and, according to DHS III, 94 per cent of Malian girls and women undergo it. The average age at which excision is performed has fallen from 6.3 years to 4.3 years.

Table 13
Percentage distribution of women who have undergone excision, as identified in the DHS II, III and IV surveys, on the basis of certain sociodemographic characteristics

Place of residence	*EDSM II (1995 96)*	*EDSM III (2000 01)*	*EDSM IV (2006)*
Bamako	95.3%	92.8%	92.6%
Other cities	85.5%	85.5%	72.2%
Urban areas	89.8%	89.5%	80.9%
Rural	95.6%	92.5%	87.4%

136. This table shows that there was a very slight decline in excision rates. This downturn is confirmed by the results of a survey on excision in Mali among children 0 to 14 years of age conducted by the national programme to combat excision (PNLE) in 2009. According to this study, the prevalence is 84% among girls 0 to 14 years of age.

4. Looking ahead

137. The revised Decennial Health and Social Development Plan (PRODESS II) and the 2009-2011 programme of sectoral investment known as COMPACT highlight reproduction, with special emphasis placed on reducing mother and child morbidity and mortality.

138. Innovative activities and initiatives are under way to accelerate the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, including:

- Implementation of the 2008-2015 road map for Accelerated Reduction of Maternal, Newborn and Child Mortality in Africa;
- Implementation of the programme to support accelerated achievement of MDG 5;
- Implementation of the plan for development of human resources in the health sector;
- The programmed medicalization of community health-care centres;
- Mali's strategy for prevention and care of fistulas;
- Review of the plan to reposition family planning;
- The scaling up of the strategy for active management of the third stage of labour, including taking matrons into account in its implementation;
- Implementation of the Mali-Tunisia reproductive health pilot project with cooperation from Spain;
- Ensuring that obstetric emergencies are properly dealt with, by setting up a referral and evacuation system with costs shared between the pregnant woman's family, the referral health centre (CSREF) and the community health association (ASACO);

- Continuing the expansion of health coverage through transfer of resources to decentralized communities.

Article 13: Elimination of discrimination in economic, social and cultural life

139. In 2002, poverty affected nearly two out of every three Malians (63.8 per cent of the total population). Indeed, 88 per cent of the poor population live in rural areas, and far more women live in poverty than men. The incidence of poverty is 75.9 per cent in rural areas, as compared with 30.1 per cent in urban areas. Moreover, twice as much social-sector spending is needed in rural areas (where 45.8 per cent of the population live in extreme poverty) to raise poor local communities to the same level as urban areas (where 22.3 per cent of the population live in extreme poverty).

140. In 2006, 56 per cent of people lived below the poverty line (153,310 CFA francs per year). This is an improvement over 2002, when it was 64 per cent.

141. Faced with this situation, the Government, through the Strategic Framework for Combating Poverty (CSLP) for 2002-2006, has set itself the objective of reducing people's poverty overall, and reducing poverty among women in particular, inter alia by:

- Strengthening women's economic role in the areas of agriculture, livestock raising, fishing, crafts and trades and the informal sector;
- Facilitating women's access to credit, land and equipment, particularly in the case of women living in rural areas or near cities.

142. As part of defining its poverty reduction strategy (CSCRP 2007-2011) Mali is envisaging measures aimed at reducing women's poverty through:

- Adoption of the gender approach as a strategic element in each development sector and at all levels;
- Taking women's needs into account in the State budget in keeping with the guidelines of the poverty reduction strategy.

143. Mali has also developed a national policy of equality between men and women, a process that was launched in June 2008. The forthcoming adoption of this policy will enable different departments to develop their sectoral policies on this matter. In any event, there is already a gender equality policy of the Ministry of Justice which forms part of the national policy.

144. The implementation of the National Strategy and of the 2005-2008 Action Plan for development of microfinance has made it possible to improve women's access to credit. Thus, in 2006 women accounted for 38.1 per cent of the overall participants in the Decentralized Financial System, compared with 35 per cent in 2002. They are actually more numerous by reason of the group loan schemes that have been developed for them, which do not necessarily show up in the totals of individual Decentralized Financial System members.

145. These initiatives have helped to reduce poverty. However, it should be noted that 64.2 per cent of households headed by a woman who does not receive funds transfers are poor, compared to 48 per cent of households headed by a woman who does receive funds transfers.

146. The number of women beneficiaries of microcredit increased steadily in the years 2006-2007-2008. But women beneficiaries of microcredit have always been outnumbered by men. This is explained inter alia by social pressures and the lack of attention given to the specific needs of women.

147. In 2008, Mali, after evaluation of the 2005-2008 action plan, adopted a new 2008-2012 action plan, one of whose aims is to cover the specific needs of two target groups: women and young creative workers.

148. In institutional terms, there have been two developments: the Centre for Promotion and Support of Decentralized Financial Systems and the Unit for Monitoring and Oversight of Decentralized Financial Systems (Cellule de Contrôle et de Surveillance des SFD).

149. Also, the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families has since 2008 been jointly piloting with the Ministry of the Economy and Finance a "Project on microcredit for development of entrepreneurship among women and young people" ("Projet de microcrédit pour le développement de l'entreprenariat des femmes et des jeunes".)

Article 14: Situation of rural women

150. Women play a key socioeconomic role in rural areas of the country, with 75 per cent of women being engaged in agriculture, with 37.66 per cent of the population being active in garden farming.

151. The average area per farm is 1,060 m^2 or 10.6 acres, of which 40 m^2, or 4 acres, go to women farmers. (Source: Planning and Statistics Unit, Rural Development Sector; Agricultural Survey 2006, survey of garden farming, 2008).

152. The foregoing applies also to vegetable-growing acreage, where one finds that in 2008 out of a total of 9,708 hectares only 2,068 belonged to women, i.e. 21.3 per cent of land farmed.

153. This means that men remain the main beneficiaries of farm land.

154. With regard to livestock-raising, while promotion of the sector is essentially held by men, an increasing number of women are making their entry. In 2009, there were ten women entrepreneurs in the area of animal health. They focus strongly on processing and marketing of agroforestry products by setting up small modern production units.

Table 14
Rate of rural agricultural population by region and by sex in 2011-2012

Region	*Men*	*Women*
Kayes	50.90	49.10
Koulikoro	51.10	48.90
Sikasso	49.80	50.20
Ségou	51.40	48.60
Mopti	53.20	46.80

Region	*Men*	*Women*
Tombouctou	53.90	46.10
Gao	51.70	48.30
Total	**51.30**	**48.70**

Source: Planning & Statistics Unit, Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2011-2012.

Bamako and Kidal were not covered by the Current Agricultural Survey

(a) Women and development programmes

155. After evaluating the implementation of the 2002-2006 poverty reduction strategy paper, the Government adopted the Strategic Framework for Growth and Poverty Reduction for 2007-2011 in order to significantly reduce poverty and accelerate progress towards achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

156. In this context, there has been significant improvement in the condition of women as a result of socioeconomic development programmes implemented by the Government with contributions from development partners: PRODESS (Decennial Social and Health Development Programme); PRODEC (Decennial Education Development Programme); PRODEJ (Decennial Justice Development Programme); PASAOP (Programme to support the Farm System and Rural Organizations).

157. In addition, several projects and programmes in support of women and for reduction of male/female inequalities have been initiated, including the following:

- Project to support strengthening of male/female equity for the reduction of economic and sociopolitical disparities (PARHF2 et PAREHF3);
- Project to support women in shea production;
- Project to support women economic actors;
- Project to build equipment at socio-educational centres for women and children;
- Projects in support of women's health and project to support improvement of the status of women and gender equity (PAASFEG) funded by UNFPA for the period 2002-2007;
- Joint United Nations support programme for the promotion of human and gender rights (PCDHG);
- Project on equality between the sexes (PROJES);
- Human rights gender equity programme (PDHEG);
- Project for the development of multi-functional platforms;
- Micro-credit project for promotion of entrepreneurship among women and young people;
- Capacity-building project for women economic actors by Spanish cooperation in the framework of NEPAD, 2008;

- Capacity-building programme for women's organizations (RECOFEM), funded by ACBF (phase 1: 2005-2009; phase 2: 2009-2013);
- "Layidu Wari" project in support of women's economic activities, 2004;
- Support for improvement of living conditions of the poor and of vulnerable sectors through decentralized communities: PAACVP –Tonka;
- Project for vegetable gardening through the support programme for sustainable development and livestock-breeding in western Sahel (PADESO);
- Implementation of integrated programmes and projects for women in livestock breeding (*Sahelian goats in Guera and "wassa chiè"*).

158. These various initiatives have considerably improved socioeconomic conditions for women in general and rural women in particular.

(b) Rural women and social security programmes

159. There is no social protection regime especially for rural women, but in 2009 legislative and regulatory measures were taken to strengthen social protection in Mali, including:

- Law No. 09_030 of 27 July 2009 introducing a medical care scheme. This law enables a woman who has no personal entitlement to any medical coverage to benefit from the medical care assistance scheme;
- Law No. 09_015 of 26 June 2009 introducing mandatory health insurance. This legislation allows the coverage of health-care costs associated with illness and maternity for the insured and their dependents. So a woman can benefit personally or also as a dependent relative of an insured.

160. Rural women are included among the beneficiaries of these measures even if they are not expressly referred to in them.

(c) Information, education and training of rural women

In the area of education, the illiteracy rate remains generally very high, especially for women (83 per cent) and for rural women (92 per cent).

161. As a result, a ministry in charge of literacy and national languages has existed in the governmental nomenclature since 2007.

162. To implement the policy of promoting literacy and the national languages, many activities have been conducted, including:

- Creating literacy centres and establishing literacy programmes for women in all regions of the country and Bamako District;
- Developing Women's Learning Centres throughout the country. There are now four, of which the three located in Kalanban coura, Bourem and Koutiala served 218 learners during the year 2007;
- Creation of Educational Outreach Centres and 1,811 Centres for Functional Literacy with 61,057 auditors enrolled (of whom 40 per cent are women), 3,343 moderators, of whom 46 per cent are women, and 24,050 newly literate, 24 per cent women, 2008;

- As part of the implementation of the literacy programme, opening of 160 literacy centres throughout the country. Training of 251 instructors including 213 for neighbourhoods of Bamako District and 38 for military camps in Bamako, Kati and Koulikoro;
- Opening of an alpha-management centre in 2009 by the Coordinating Organization for Women's Associations and Organizations (CAFO);
- Strengthening the Lassa centre for the training of women through installation of new micro-projects;
- Creation of 1,302 Centre for Education for Development in 2008 with 31,747 learners (49 per cent girls) and 1,363 educators (24 per cent women).

In the area of training, several training sessions were held, especially on techniques of agricultural production, processing/conservation, marketing of agro-forestry-pastoral products, advocacy, organizational management, leadership, etc.;

- Vocational training in improved fattening techniques, tanning, production of hides and skins and "*wassa chie*" chicken farming;
- Training in artisanal fish farming of members of fishermen's and fish farmers' associations;
- Training women in techniques of production and conservation of fisheries products and aquaculture products.

In the area of information, the Demographic and Health Survey of 2006 indicates that nearly 25 per cent of women have no access to any of the media, compared to 31 per cent for rural women; the extension of national coverage by the creation of new entities (233 radio stations in 2008 compared to 178 in 2006) has improved the rate. Several local radio broadcasters, including rural stations, have arisen in the country.

163. Also, national television is increasingly reaching into rural areas.

164. Local news and communication centres (centres locaux d'information et de communication — CLIC) have been created.

(d) Rural women's organizations

165. According to the Educational Outreach Centre study on rights of women and children conducted by the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families in 2008, 54 per cent of rural women belong to an association.

166. Generally speaking, there are two kinds of women's organizations: traditional and formal. The traditional sorts of organization represent the survival of a communitarian organizational structure handed down from past generations, while the formal sorts of organization are part of the overall system of associations and cooperatives. Rural women, because they are illiterate and lack information, have difficulty adapting to the rigid legal framework that governs the establishment, structure and functioning of these formal organizations.

167. The various formal women's organizations that exist in rural areas comprise groups, associations, cooperatives and even economic interest groups (GIEs). All of these organizations are found throughout the country.

168. Since 2004, the Government of Mali through the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families has worked in partnership with the Permanent Assembly of Chambers of Agriculture (APCAM) to help rural women establish the National Federation of Rural Women (FENAFER) and affiliated rural women's vocational associations (ASPROFER). This association has a headquarters in Bamako, bylaws and rules of procedure. The organs of governance comprise a national bureau and local bureaux. The federation works closely with APCAM and represents rural women at national, regional and international meetings concerning rural women. This enables them to participate and keep abreast of issues of concern to them.

Table 15
Heads of farm establishments by sex

Sex	*2010-2011*	*2011-2012*
Men	97.8	97.9
Women	2.2	2.1
Total	**100.0**	**100.0**

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey 2010-2011, 2011-2012.

(e) Rural women's participation in community activities

169. The decentralization to which Mali has been firmly committed since 1994 has afforded women many opportunities for full participation in political, social and economic affairs. It has enabled women to appreciate the importance of participating in public and political affairs and given them the opportunity to assume political leadership (municipal councillors and aldermen). This is reflected in the number of women standing for election and being elected in the elections of 2004 and 2009 in rural communities. Out of 9 women mayors, 7 were elected in rural communities, i.e. 77.77 per cent. On matters of women and conservation, women are strongly involved in pursuing the use of improved stoves utilizing less firewood. They are also taking the lead in fighting desertification through the fixation of dunes (work for food) in the northern part of the country.

(f) Rural women and access to factors and means of production (land, credit, equipment, etc.)

170. Law 06-045 AN-RM of 5 September 2006 concerning the Agricultural Guidance Act constitutes a major stride in the area of rural development, particularly for the advancement of rural women. Its article 8 provides that the agricultural development policy seeks to ensure promotion of women and men in the agricultural sector with respect for equity, especially in the rural setting. Article 24 provides that the State shall promote the establishment of young people, women and vulnerable groups as farmers, especially by encouraging their access to factors of production and developing specific technical or financial support mechanisms. Article 45 provides that the State shall encourage equity between women and men in the rural setting, especially in farming. Article 83 provides that the State will ensure equitable access to agricultural land ownership by different categories of farmers and agricultural operators. To that end, the State will facilitate access by growing numbers of farm operators, especially young people and women, to animal and motorized traction.

Table 16
Distribution of land parcels by sex of owner and by region, 2011-2012 (in %)
Unit: number and percentage

	Sex					
	Men		Women		Total	
Region	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%
Kayes	1 196	96.4	45	3.6	1 241	100.0
Koulikoro	1 020	98.0	21	2.0	1 041	100.0
Sikasso	1 076	98.7	14	1.3	1 090	100.0
Ségou	1 127	98.7	15	1.3	1 142	100.0
Mopti	1 327	97.4	36	2.6	1 363	100.0
Tombouctou	531	99.4	3	0.6	534	100.0
Gao	233	98.7	3	1.3	236	100.0

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2011-2012.

171. In 2011-2012, the proportion of women having access to land ownership was highest in Kayes, with 3.6 per cent, compared with only 0.6 per cent in Tombouctou and 1.3 per cent in Sikasso, Ségou and Gao. That rate is relatively low, which means that women have scant access to ownership of land in Mali, despite the policy measures adopted favouring women such as the Agricultural Guidance Act, which reserves part (10 per cent) of all land developed for women and young people.

Table 17
Distribution of cultivated land in % by type of crop and sex of parcel owner

	2004-2005		2006-2007		2008-2009	
	Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner	
Crop	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Millet	97.7%	2.3%	98.2%	1.8%	97.8%	2.2%
Sorghum	97.6%	2.4%	97.9%	2.1%	98.7%	1.3%
Rice	95.7%	4.3%	82.5%	17.5%	94.4%	5.6%
Maize	98.2%	1.8%	97.7%	2.3%	99.1%	0.9%
Fonio	82.9%	17.1%	67.8%	32.2%	89.9%	10.1%
Potato	91.8%	8.2%	97.6%	2.4%	99.9%	0.1%
Manioc	100.0%		99.8%	0.2%	100.0%	
Taro	100.0%		0.0%	0.0%	1.8%	98.2%
Cowpea	86.4%	13.6%	96.2%	3.8%	88.1%	11.9%
Peanut	61.6%	38.4%	56.2%	43.8%	47.8%	52.2%
Voandzou	76.9%	23.1%	56.9%	43.1%	84.6%	15.4%
Soya	99.6%	0.4%	94.4%	5.6%	91.1%	8.9%
Sesame	90.7%	9.3%	80.2%	19.8%	90.0%	10.0%
Ginger	100.0%		0.0%	0.0%	53.6%	46.4%

Crop	2004-2005		2006-2007		2008-2009	
	Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner	
	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Pimento	96.8%	3.2%	96.0%	4.0%	67.9%	32.1%
Okra	30.5%	69.5%	23.4%	76.6%	49.9%	50.1%
Watermelon	100.0%	.	97.2%	2.8%	99.5%	0.5%

Source: Statistical Planning Unit, Rural Development, Agricultural Survey 2008-2009.

Table 18
Distribution of cultivated land by type of management, sex of parcel owner, and region (in %)

Region	Sex of parcel owner	2004-2005		2006-2007		2008-2009	
		Type of management		Type of management		Type of management	
		Collective	Individual	Collective	Individual	Collective	Individual
Kayes	Men	87.9%	12.1%	94.2%	5.8%	81.3%	18.7%
	Women	14.3%	85.7%	8.0%	92.0%	3.5%	96.5%
Koulikoro	Men	87.2%	12.8%	92.0%	8.0%	93.1%	6.9%
	Women	13.2%	86.8%	9.2%	90.8%	6.5%	93.5%
Sikasso	Men	93.0%	7.0%	97.3%	2.7%	97.1%	2.9%
	Women	25.0%	75.0%	5.8%	94.2%	10.8%	89.2%
Ségou	Men	95.0%	5.0%	95.8%	4.2%	97.0%	3.0%
	Women	59.2%	40.8%	59.7%	40.3%	17.4%	82.6%
Mopti	Men	93.3%	6.7%	91.9%	8.1%	92.0%	8.0%
	Women	20.8%	79.2%	6.6%	93.4%	33.8%	66.2%
Tombouctou	Men	95.5%	4.5%	100.0%	.	98.7%	1.3%
	Women	100.0%	.	100.0%	.	100.0%	.
Gao	Men	99.2%	0.8%	94.6%	5.4%	84.7%	15.3%
	Women	97.1%	2.9%	99.4%	0.6%	92.9%	7.1%
Bamako	Men	91.8%	8.2%	.	.	.	.
	Women	90.4%	9.6%	.	.	.	.

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2008-2009.

Table 19
Distribution of cultivated land on average by sex of parcel owner and by region (in hectares)

	2004-2005		2006-2007		2008-2009	
	Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner		Sex of parcel owner	
Region	Men	Women	Men	Women	Men	Women
Kayes	1.13	0.47	0.98	0.50	1.27	0.53
Koulikoro	1.43	0.57	1.32	0.66	1.54	0.46
Sikasso	1.60	0.37	1.44	0.57	1.45	0.37
Ségou	2.04	0.72	1.42	0.53	1.52	0.36
Mopti	1.44	0.40	1.31	0.50	1.76	0.55
Tombouctou	1.16	1.08	0.94	0.39	0.94	0.67
Gao	1.08	0.45	0.58	0.31	0.64	0.14
Bamako	0.57	0.24				
Total	1.53	0.47	1.28	0.55	1.47	0.47

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2008-2009.

172. With regard to the amount of land farmed, it appears that men are farming, on average, three times as much land as women. This is the case in all the regions, although the difference narrows slightly in Tombouctou.

Table 20
Distribution of farm equipment by sex of owner, 2008-2009

	Owner		Co-owner	
Type of equipment	Men	Women	Men	Women
Grinder	69 822	0	5 581	0
Rototiller	7 759	156	0	0
Combine	171 215	963	13 909	0
Plough	740 820	11033	87 675	284
Backhoe	704 056	18768	30 438	0
Seeder	219 871	1930	19 448	0
Harrow	114 664	213	3 960	0
Handcart	246 815	2546	41 395	0
Processing machine	67 129	0	8 631	0
Improved hive	65 122	647	0	0
Traditional hive	15 317	76	0	0
Rice huller	820	0	0	0
Maize sheller	1 181	0	0	0
Rice thresher	0	0	0	0
Millet thresher	14 995	0	1 158	0
Motorized unit	2 674	0	535	0
Manual pump	783	0	0	0

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2008-2009.

173. It may be noted that the implements most widely used by rural women are ploughs, mule-drawn hoes, handcarts and seeders. Men are the main owners of large items such as threshers, shellers, hullers, motorized units and pumps. In addition to the equipment referred to in the table, a programme distributing tractors on loan has made it possible to for rural women to be better equipped. Of the 375 tractors distributed in 2008, 39 went to women, i.e. a proportion of 10 per cent.

174. Also, of the 275 tractors distributed by the Ministry of Agriculture, 8 per cent were allocated to women, i.e. 22 women beneficiaries, of whom 3 were in Kayes, one in Koulikoro, 2 in Sikasso, 6 in Ségou, 3 in Mopti, 2 in Tombouctou and 5 in Bamako.

175. Regarding grants made by the Youth Employment Agency (APEJ — Agence pour l'Emploi des Jeunes), there were 17 women out of 100 beneficiaries, including 2 women in Kayes, 4 in Koulikoro, 3 in Sikasso, 2 in Ségou, 2 in Mopti, 1 in Tombouctou, 1 in Gao and 2 in the district of Bamako.

Table 21
Distribution of draft animals by sex of owner, 2008-2009

	Owner		*Co-owner*	
Types	*Men*	*Women*	*Men*	*Women*
Oxen	1 250 367	14 760	159 498	156
Mules	548 500	11 876	29 736	0
Horses	50 366	715	2 545	0
Camels	318 299	5 072	22 105	0

Source: CPS/SDR Rural Development Sector, Current Agricultural Survey, 2008-2009.

(g) Improvement of living conditions

176. In order to improve the situation of women, the Government, through the Ministry for the Advancement of Women, Children and Families (MPFEF) and its development partners, has launched strategies to help women by providing them with equipment and training that will be useful in their day-to-day activities. The overall objective of this policy is to lighten the burden of household chores so that women can devote time to production and development.

Equipment

The programme to develop multifunctional platforms

177. The platform is a true rural development instrument that can contribute to reaching at least five of the Millennium Development Goals (No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 7). A multifunctional platform consists of a diesel motor that can be connected to different modules which are mainly machines for processing agricultural products, for generating electricity for various purposes, and above all to supply small community water and electricity networks.

178. In December 2005, the Government of Mali adopted a programme to equip 1,500 villages, for a total cost of 15 billion CFA francs, funded mainly by the Government of Mali, UNDP, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, and other

partners. Platforms are installed only at the request of a village women's association.

179. Between August 2008 and March 2010, 200 platforms were placed in service, enabling 300,000 women small farmers to diversify and increase their income.

The programme of construction of training, production and apprenticeship centres for women in rural communities and regional capitals

180. This programme began in 2002, making possible the following construction projects:

- Construction of 24 women's self-help centres, from 2002 to 2006: Kayes-di, Faraba Nyafala, Naréna, Kati, Djidjè, Kignan, Fourou, Soungoumba, Cinzana Gare, Korienzé, Hondouboumou, Gao and Yirimadio;
- From 2007 to 2010: Kéniéba, Youwarou, Tominian, Koro, Bankass, Teninkou, Bla, Goundam, Rharous, Bourem;
- Construction of 10 shelters for women and children. Construction of shea processing units in Dioila in 2005, Sikasso in 2006, Kemeni and Ségou in 2007, Loulouni, and Bancoumana in 2008, San in 2009 and one other unit under construction in Kita;
- Construction of small shea processing units known as "*cases à karité*" ("shea huts") in 2009 (2 in San and Bla, 5 in Yorosso);
- Construction of a unit for processing of hides and leather in Mopti;
- Start-up of integrated projects in the area of agriculture: pourghère (*jatropha curcas*), improved baobab, henna.

Access to drinking water:

181. Since 2004, as part of efforts to reach the MDGs, Mali has adopted a water resources map and a National Plan for Access to Drinking Water 2004-2015, together with programmed investments of 400 billion CFA francs.

182. In February of 2006 the Government of Mali adopted a National Water Policy whose aim is to contribute to the continuous development of the country by providing appropriate solutions to problems relating to water, with respect for sustainable management of water resources.

183. The following projects were carried out in that perspective in 2008:

- Completion of 683 wells and bore-holes equipped with manual pumps, and reconditioning of 371 others;
- Completion of 27 water supply systems for 531 hydrants, including 60 in rural locations;
- Formalization of 57 decisions to transfer jurisdiction to 57 communities;
- Formation of 262 Communes in the framework of implementing the transfer of jurisdiction;
- Establishment of 13 local water committees in the framework of implementing Integrated Water Resources Management.

184. In addition to these achievements, the National Programme of Rural Infrastructure during the period 2002-2008 completed 800 bore-holes and refurbished 500 wells and 800 pumps. There is therefore an increase in the number of villages with at least one modern water source. The number has increased from 10,349 in 2008 to 10,503 in 2009

185. These efforts have made it possible to improve the indicators for access to drinking water.

Access to habitat

186. The system of inheritance does not favour women, which places them at a disadvantage with regard to access to housing. Despite this situation, it can be observed that affordable housing is increasingly appearing in rural areas and women are benefiting from it (assisted housing situation).

Access to electricity

187. The country's political authorities, through the energy policy, are seeking to contribute to sustainable development through the provision of widely affordable energy services produced at low cost and conducive to socioeconomic activities. In 2006 this aim took the form of adoption by the Government of a National Energy Policy. In that spirit, the Biofuels Strategy was adopted and the National Biofuels Agency was established in 2008.

Achievements in the area of domestic energy:

- More than 318,000 improved wood stoves in 2007;
- Approximately 22,500 gas stoves in 2007;
- More than 3,000 oil stoves imported and placed on the market, constituting genuine growth.

Achievements in the area of rural electrification

188. It should be noted that from 2007 to 2009 the number of rural subscribers doubled, although the need is immense.

189. As from 2009, there were 133 people benefiting from a light source, compared with 125 previously. This new standard was established following a survey entitled "Survey of impacts of the project on domestic energy and access to basic services in rural areas under the living conditions of beneficiary populations — Provision of electric service component" commissioned by the Malian Agency for Energy Development and Rural Electrification (Agence Malienne pour le Développement de l'Energie et de l'Electrification Rurale — AMADER) whose final report was issued in February 2010.

Environment/sanitation

190. The National Environment Protection Policy (PNPE) adopted in 1998 provides the guidance framework for effective and sustainable environmental management and planning. It is accompanied by an environmental action plan (Plan d'actions environnementales — PNAE) comprising 9 cross-cutting programmes of action (Programmes d'actions Nationaux transversaux — PAN).

191. Its implementation should lead to providing a significant response to fundamental questions concerning the fight against desertification, ensuring food security, and combating poverty, which constitute constraints that need to be removed in order to ensure lasting socioeconomic development for Mali.

192. With respect to environment and sanitation, the following should be noted:

- Improvement of 3,089 family bathrooms and 128 public bathrooms;
- Construction of 960 drain-trap washing basins;
- Finalizing of 17 km of collectors and gutters.

193. Women take active part in water management and sanitation. Indeed, they account for 1/5 of the members of local water committees, 32 per cent of members of Rural Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Committees, 40 per cent of the members of water-point committees of Koulikoro and 30 per cent of those of Sikasso.

194. With regard to sanitation and hygiene, the percentage of the population enjoying access to adequate sanitation and hygiene facilities is 23 per cent in 2008.

195. Thus, more than three quarters of the population does not have an adequate sanitation and hygiene system, which constitutes a health problem, especially for women, who constitute more than half of the population.

Development of roads and transport; impact on rural women

196. During the period 2002 to 2011 several roads were paved, including 512 km of rural roads between 2002 and 2008 by the National Rural Infrastructure Programme (PNIR).[3] In 2008 there was road construction in Kati-Kita (60 km), Bamako-Naréna (17 km) and roads to the secondary cities of Djeli, Tominian and Sofara (56 km) linking to the main paved road network, Sekokoto-Bafing (8 km), as well as roads between Kita-Toukoto-Bafoulabé (50 km) and Dioro-Farakoumassa (26 km). Surveys were also done for the Bafoulabé bridge and the third Bamako bridge.

197. The construction of these roads has helped to facilitate the movement of rural populations, including rural women and their trade in goods and services with the nearby urban centres. These roads facilitate women's access to health centres, reducing mortality from diseases and complications of pregnancy.

Transport:

198. The transport sector, comprising mainly rail, river and rural road transport, contributes significantly to growth of cross-border trade, in which women are the leading stakeholders, dealing mainly in fish, loincloths, and agro-food products. Internally, it enables the movement of vegetable-garden and farm products from rural areas in Kayes and Koulikoro to the District. Increasingly, rural women have other means of transport such as carts, donkeys, canoes, etc. which encourage rural trade, especially by means of country fairs and markets.

[3] CPS/SDR (Rural Development Sector). 2009 catalogue of rural development projects and programmes, 2009.

Article 15: Equality of men and women before the law and in civil matters

199. Judicial assistance in Mali is governed by Law No. 01-082 of 24/08/2001 and decree No. 06-02/PRM of 06/10/06.

200. Legal aid is provided at legal clinics and serves to support women who find themselves in legal difficulties.

201. However, there are obstacles, such as:

- Administrative slowness and high legal costs;
- Bad faith by certain judicial actors and court officers who are not sensitive to gender and women's rights;
- Insufficient information about legal instruments relating to women's rights;
- The difficult conditions under which judicial personnel perform their duties, etc.

202. The Constitution enshrines the principle of equality of men and women before the law. However, Mali has not yet adopted legislation on certain matters, such as access to land and management of succession. In such matters, the parties are referred to customary law. For example, ordinance no. 02-02/PRM of 22/03/2000 containing the Property Code recognizes custom as grounds for giving access to property.

203. Law 06-045 of 5 September 2006 concerning the Agricultural Guidance Act, adopted on 16 August 2006, provides that agricultural development policy aims to encourage men and women living in a spirit of equity in rural and urban settings. It enshrines the right to food security for all in the context of the goal of food sovereignty. The Agricultural Guidance Act prescribes the principle of equal access to land by men and women under the same conditions. Mali also has a policy of promotion of women's rights. It implemented an action plan covering the period 2002 to 2006. It has adopted a national policy document on gender advancement, the National Gender Policy adopted in 2010, containing strategic measures for the advancement of the rights of women and girls.

Legal aid for women's access to justice

204. With respect to legal aid for access to justice by women and children, the institutional machinery includes:

- Legal clinics;
- Legal aid centres have been created and are operating (Kayes1, Koulikoro 1, Mopti 1, Bamako 2, Ségou 1, Gao 1 Tombouctou 1);
- Paralegals are also being trained.

205. Some of the legal clinics are staffed by associations for the defence of women's and children's rights, such as Association Jeunesse Mali (AJM) (Mali Youth Association); WILDAF (Women in Law and Development in Africa); Groupe pivot: droit et citoyenneté des femmes (Law and Citizenship Women's Group); Association for Progress and Defence of Malian Women's Rights (Association pour le progrès et la défense des droits des femmes maliennes); Coordinating Organization for Women's Associations and Organizations in Mali (CAFO).

206. There have been major advances in the area of human rights, including:

- A joint programme for protection and promotion of human rights and gender rights, which has been addressed in several human rights trainings events;
- Creation and operation of a national human rights commission;
- Institutionalization of the Forum for Democratic Discussion (Espace d'Interpellation Démocratique — EID);
- Presentation of the first and second reports under the Universal Periodic Review;
- Intervention of counsel at the inquiry stage.

JUSTICE

207. With regard to access to justice, there is no discrimination between men and women.

208. Article 36 of the Marriage and Family Code provides that "A married woman shall possess full civil capacity; the exercise of that capacity shall be limited only by the marriage contract and by the law".

209. It should be noted, however, that few judges are able to systematically and directly refer to the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women in support of their decisions.

210. It should be noted that women are faced with unwieldy judicial procedures, lack of information and assistance, and problems relating to court costs. The amount of such costs is high in relation to the average citizen's income, constituting an obstacle to justice for women without means.

211. The establishment of legal aid services and a legal assistance fund for women will help to overcome these problems facing women in regard to legal proceedings.

212. Article 5 of Mali's Constitution recognizes the freedom of all citizens to come and go and their free choice of residence.

Article 16: Equality in marriage under family law

213. Under the law of Mali, Marriage may only be entered into with the free and full consent of the intending spouses. Consent is a condition *sine qua non* of its validity. Article 146 of the Civil Code confirms this provision.

214. Article 10 of the Code of Marriage and Family provides that marriage must be formulated orally in the presence of the future spouses; it is entered into by signature or, failing this, by applying a fingerprint at the bottom of the document.

215. Polygamy is provided for in the marriage code of Mali. There are disparities in the areas of management and decision-making within the household, inheritance, divorce especially with regard to causes and effects, parental authority — all important considerations with regard to women's rights.

EARLY MARRIAGE:

216. In order to preserve the rights of young girls for their best interests and those of their family, the legislator has placed special emphasis on actions of prevention, management and follow-up of the negative consequences of forced and early marriages, with respect to negative consequences on reproductive health.

217. Maternal mortality and infant mortality have declined significantly due to the improvement of health centres and more frequent use of them.

218. Initiatives taken in the area of reproductive health have had positive impacts (caesarean sections are more frequent and are performed at no cost; comprehensive treatment of fistula). Psycho-social or nutritional coverage for women victims of the consequences of early marriage is in the process of being introduced.

219. The activities of most centres are focused on prevention and counselling.

220. **In the medical and legal areas**: Awareness-raising workshops are being organized for community representatives and administrative and religious leaders on the frequency of early marriages and their consequences on reproductive health, and support is being extended to advocacy efforts for legislation aimed at better protecting the rights of young girls and women.

Perception of reasons for early marriages:

221. The reasons most often adduced are of a sociocultural character:

- Avoiding illegitimate pregnancies (marginalization of the girl);
- Better educating the girl (training the girl in her new domestic responsibilities in her in-laws' family);
- Protecting the girl's virginity (pre-conjugal virginity);
- The following may also be cited:
  - For sedentary people, lower costs;
  - For nomadic people, perpetuating the family line.

Perception of early marriages' negative consequences for health:

- Risk of infant and maternal mortality;
- Difficulties of labour (painful and long labour; obstetric risks such as dystocia, lacerations, traumatic injuries, vesico-vaginal fistula);
- Difficulties in sexual relations with the partner (laceration, physical and psychological trauma).

222. The consequences of early marriage may be of a medical kind, namely unwanted pregnancies, pregnancies too early or too close together, risk of transmitting STDs or HIV/AIDS, spontaneous or provoked abortions, infertility, difficult or premature labour; low birth weight or even cerebral lesions in the newborn; maternal death or neonatal death; sexual dysfunctions (rigidity, vaginitis, uro-genital fistulas, traumas of all kinds, etc.). There are also other repercussions of early marriages that are no less important:

In educational terms: young girls leaving school, remaining unschooled or dropping out;

In social terms: deterioration of social relations with failed marriages, instability (multiple divorces, flight, home abandonment, single-mother households, stigmatization, rejection by the husband, family or even society, and finally suicide.

Equality of men and women in marriage

223. The code of persons and the family contains important innovations:

The amount of dowry is set at the token sum of 15,000 CFA francs both for a young girl and for a woman already married. It is not reimbursed in the event of divorce if the marriage has been consummated.

With regard to filiation, in addition to changes in terminology regarding adultery, incest and children born out of wedlock, the rules for establishing the paternity of children born out of wedlock (recognition, repudiation, justification) have been reviewed. Emphasis has been placed on the following:

- Definition of engagement and reparations in the event of breaking of engagement due to fault;
- Full legal capacity for women on a par with men within marriage;
- In order to adapt the law to social reality, and for reasons of social justice, introduction of divorce and legal separation by mutual consent and of divorce by living separate and apart;
- The concept of "parental authority" has replaced that of "paternal power" because it is more equitable and in keeping with the constitution as well as conventions and treaties, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Provisions regarding succession that give every person the right to decide while living, in writing, how his/her estate will be settled in keeping with religious or customary law if necessary. Failing the exercise of this right, provisions governing inheritance such as those of the current code are applied.
- There has been a noteworthy improvement in the position of the surviving spouse, male or female. Depending on the situation, that spouse may have partial or complete usufruct of the property, may receive one quarter or the whole of the estate, and at all events enjoys a right of occupancy in premises that were occupied at the time the succession opened and has a preferential right to the farmstead or business locale;
- Introduction of the possibility for a woman to inherit land from her deceased husband;
- The validity of a marriage now depends on the free consent of the spouses;
- Any officer of the Civil Registry who performs an early marriage is subject to a sentence of imprisonment;

- Recognition of the woman as head of household when the husband is absent for a prolonged period without justification, is missing, is under a banishment order (*interdiction*) or is not able to make known his will.

224. All limitations on the exercise of parental rights by a surviving mother have been eliminated.

225. Law No. **02-044 of 24/06/2002** on reproductive health provides that "men and women are equal in rights and dignity with regard to reproductive health" (free choice of number of children, spacing of children).

CONCLUSION

226. It emerges from this report that for the reporting period 2006-2010 corresponding to the sixth and seventh combined reports of Mali, there has unquestionably been progress, especially with regard to improvement of living conditions of women (satisfaction of practical interests). In the rural setting, numerous groupings of women for social and economic purposes have improved their access to equipment, inputs, land and factors of production. Increasingly, women are organizing around agricultural/forestry/pastoral processing units and becoming involved in marketing through women's and children's centres (Maisons de la femme et de l'Enfant) and women's self-help centres (Centres d'autopromotion des femmes).

227. The Agricultural Guidance Act adopted by the Government in 2006 removes all legal barriers to access to land and use of land by women. Also, women must be represented in policymaking and management bodies locally and within the High Council of Agriculture (Conseil Supérieur de l'Agriculture). In addition, other actions have been taken that constitute decisive steps towards the promotion and effectiveness of women's rights in Mali, in particular:

- Adoption and publication of the Individual and Family Code;
- Adoption of the National Gender Policy of Mali and implementation of its plan of action.

228. However, despite this progress, disparities exist on the geographical plane (rural/urban) that should be corrected. Otherwise, in terms of strategic interests, there has been little change in the status of women (strategic interests).

229. Despite noteworthy strides in certain areas, especially in bolstering women's participation in public life, access to decision-making positions in policymaking bodies and government generally falls short of expectations.

230. Women remain under-represented in the governance bodies of decentralized communities, especially in rural areas, despite the dynamic spirit shown by women's social and economic organizations.